

Red Line 2.0

Obama, Putin Clash Over Fate of Syria, Assad

United States President Barack Obama, right, and Russia's President Vladimir Putin pose for members of the media before a bilateral meeting Monday, Sept. 28, 2015, at United Nations headquarters. (AP Photo/Andrew Harnik)

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Obama, Putin clash over fate of Syria, Assad

JULIE PACE

V. ISACHENKOV

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP)

— U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Vladimir Putin sharply disagreed Monday over the chaos in Syria, with Obama urging a political transition to replace the Syrian president but Putin warning it would be a mistake to abandon the current government.

After dueling speeches at the United Nations General Assembly, Obama and Putin also met privately for 90 minutes — their first face-to-face encounter in nearly a year.

At the heart of their dispute over Syria is the fate of embattled Syrian leader Bashar Assad, a Russian ally. The U.S. has long called for Assad to leave power, while Russia has cast the Syrian government as the only viable option for defeating the Islamic State, a militant group that has taken advantage of the vacuum created by the civil war.

During his address to the UN, Obama declared, "We must recognize that there cannot be, after so much bloodshed, so much carnage, a return to the prewar status quo."

Putin, speaking shortly after the U.S. president, urged the world to stick with Assad.

"We believe it's a huge mistake to refuse to cooperate with the Syrian authorities, with the government forces, those who are bravely fighting terror face-to-face," Putin said during his first appearance at the U.N. gathering in a decade.

Obama and Putin's disparate views of the grim situation in Syria left little indication of how the two countries might work together to end a conflict that has killed more than 250,000 people and resulted in a flood of refugees. Indeed, the leaders' private meetings ended with vague statements about the need for a political resolution to the crisis, but no clear pathway for making

that happen.

The crisis has taken on fresh urgency amid Russia's recent military buildup in Syria. Putin has cast the

join the U.S.-led coalition already launching strikes against the militants. He said Russia would only take such a step in accordance

Hollande backed Obama's call for Assad's ouster, saying "nobody can imagine" a political solution in Syria if he is still in power. Hollande

while Syria's government needs reform, the country will fall to the Islamic State if the international community makes getting rid of Assad its top goal.

Despite Obama's staunch opposition to Assad remaining in office, the U.S. has struggled to push him from power. Russia has long been a major obstacle, shielding Assad from U.N. sanctions and continuing to provide the Syrian government with weapons.

In fact, Russia has appeared to deepen its support for Assad in recent weeks, sending additional military equipment and troops with the justification that it is helping the government fight the Islamic State. The military buildup has confounded U.S. officials, who spent the summer hoping Russia's patience with Assad was waning and political negotiations could be started.

Obama and Putin each framed his case for Syria's future in the context of a broader approach to the world, launching veiled criticisms at each other. □



U.S. President Barack Obama, left, and Russian President Vladimir Putin, right, toast during a luncheon, at United Nations headquarters, Monday, Sept. 28, 2015.

(Mikhail Metzel, RIA-Novosti, Kremlin Pool Photo via AP)

increased presence of equipment and troops in Syria as part of the effort to defeat the Islamic State, and suggested Monday that Russia could launch airstrikes against the militants. "We are thinking about it and don't exclude anything," he said.

It's unlikely Putin would

with international law, a veiled reference to his criticism that Obama's coalition does not meet such a standard.

The Syria crisis largely overshadowed the summit's other discussions on peacekeeping, climate change and global poverty.

French President Francois

called on countries with influence in Syria, including Gulf nations and Iran, to be engaged in a transition.

However, Iran — which along with Russia is a strong backer of Assad — said the Syrian president must remain in power to fight extremists. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said that

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Trump unveils tax plan that would lower taxes for millions



Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump talks about his tax plan during a news conference, Monday, Sept. 28, 2015, in New York. The Republican front-runner is calling for an overhaul of the tax code that would eliminate income taxes for millions of Americans, while lowering them for the highest-income earners and business. (AP Photo/Julie Jacobson)

JILL COLVIN

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump on Monday proposed eliminating income taxes for millions of Americans, and lower rates for the highest-income earners, as part of a plan he said would grow the U.S. economy at a pace not seen in years.

Trump's tax plan is only the third major policy proposal from Trump, who has also outlined plans for immigration and guns. He has been criticized for failing to unveil specific policy proposals as he's risen to the top in early preference polling nationwide and in early voting states. But polls taken after the second Republican

presidential debate on Sept. 16 show retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson narrowing the gap with Trump. Trump's plan for an overhaul of the U.S. tax code would eliminate federal income taxes on individuals earning less than \$25,000 and married couples earning less than \$50,000. He said those individuals would receive "a new one page form to send the IRS saying, 'I win.'"

Trump's plan would also disproportionately benefit wealthy earners by lowering the highest income tax rate from 39.6 percent to 25 percent, and businesses by cutting their tax rate — from major corporations to mom-and-pop shops — to no more than 15 percent.

"There will be a major tax reduction," Trump said at a news conference at his Trump Tower skyscraper in Manhattan. "It'll simplify the tax code. It'll grow the American economy at a level that it hasn't seen for decades."

Trump said he wants to eliminate the so-called "carried interest loophole" that allows managers of hedge funds and private equity firms to pay a lower tax rate than most individuals, and would reduce or eliminate most deductions and loopholes for both individuals and corporations.

McCarthy calls for beefed-up response to IS, Russia

DEB RIECHMANN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The front-runner to become the next leader of the U.S. House of Representatives denounced President Barack Obama's foreign policy on Monday, saying the U.S. has "lost the respect of allies and adversaries alike."

Republican Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, who spoke after the president addressed the United Na-

tions, said the U.S. should consider putting some special forces on the ground in Iraq to help coordinate airstrikes against Islamic State militants.

He also backed a no-fly zone in northern Syria to stem the flow of refugees, and provide a space for Syrian rebels to fight the militants — steps the White House has so far opposed.

"We must wage this war against radical Islam as if our life depended on

it. Because it does," said McCarthy, who also reiterated his criticism of the international nuclear deal with Iran.

"We have lost the respect of allies and adversaries alike. We have isolated Israel while emboldening nations like Iran. We let North Korea threaten South Korea, Russia encroach on Ukraine and now China is asserting a greater sphere of influence," McCarthy said. "Wherever we look,

the world is less safe and less secure because America is less engaged."

McCarthy is a heavy favorite to replace John Boehner in one of the most powerful jobs in Washington and become second in line to succeed the president. The speaker announced his resignation Friday amid growing discontent among some of the most conservative members of the House Republican conference.

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New clemency hearing set for Georgia female death row inmate

KATE BRUMBACK
Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — A day before the only woman on Georgia's death row is set to be executed, the state Board of Pardons and Paroles on Monday scheduled a new clemency hearing in her case. Kelly Renee Gissendaner, 47, is set to die by injection of pentobarbital at 7 p.m. (2300 GMT) Tuesday at the state prison in Jackson. She was previously scheduled to die March 2, but state officials called off the execution "out of an abundance of caution" after noticing that the execution drug was "cloudy." The new clemency hearing will be held Tuesday morning. The parole board, the only entity authorized to commute a death sentence in Georgia, said in a news release that its members have thoroughly reviewed a second request from Gissendaner's lawyers to reconsider a February decision denying clemency. They are holding the new hearing to gather additional information from repre-

sentatives for Gissendaner, the release says.

Gissendaner was convicted of murder in the

lover, Gregory Owen, who stabbed Douglas Gissendaner to death. Owen, who took a plea deal and testi-

Two of Gissendaner's three children already asked the board earlier this year to spare their mother's life.

address the board, said Susan Casey, an attorney for Gissendaner.

Earlier Monday, U.S. District Judge Thomas Thrash declined to halt Gissendaner's execution or reconsider his dismissal of a complaint that Gissendaner's lawyers filed in March. They argued, in part that there's a substantial risk of serious harm if the execution proceeds as planned because officials still can't explain what went wrong with the execution drug in March. Gissendaner's attorneys have appealed Thrash's ruling to the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

After the problem with the execution drug surfaced, Georgia corrections officials suspended executions until an analysis could be done.

In mid-April they released lab reports, a sworn statement from a pharmacological expert hired by the state and a short video showing a syringe of clear liquid with chunks of a white solid floating in the solution. □



In this 2004 photo, Kelly Renee Gissendaner, the only woman on Georgia's death row, looks through the slot in her cell door as a guard brings her a cup of ice at Metro State Prison in Atlanta. Georgia state officials have granted a new clemency hearing for Gissendaner. The Georgia Board of Pardons and Paroles said in a news release Monday, Sept. 28, 2015, that it will hold the hearing Tuesday morning.

(Bita Honarvar/Atlanta Journal-Constitution/AP)

February 1997 slaying of her husband, Douglas Gissendaner. Prosecutors said she conspired with her

fied against Gissendaner, is serving life in prison and will become eligible for parole in 2022.

The parole board's decision to hold a new hearing came after her oldest child, Brandon, asked to

Prison worker who helped 2 killers escape gets up to 7 years

MICHAEL HILL
Associated Press

PLATTSBURGH, New York (AP) — A sobbing former prison worker who helped two murderers escape from a maximum-security lockup said she regretted her "horrible mistake" as she was sentenced Monday to up to seven years behind bars as part of a plea deal. Joyce Mitchell apologized profusely as she was sentenced to 2 1/3 to seven years in prison, saying she acted in part out of fear. She also might have to contribute to the \$120,000 in restitution the state is

seeking for damages to Clinton Correctional Facility from the brazen June 6 escape. The judge showed little sympathy as he handed down the sentence and set a Nov. 6 restitution hearing.

"If I could take it all back, I would," she told the judge. "I never intended for any of this to happen."

Mitchell entered the courtroom in tears and cried throughout most of the 35-minute sentencing. She apologized to the community, her former co-workers and law enforcement officers for the weeks of fear

and disruption the search for the killers caused.

Mitchell, 51, had pleaded guilty to charges related to providing hacksaw blades and other tools to inmates Richard Matt and David Sweat.

Matt was serving 25 years to life for the killing and dismembering of his former boss. Sweat was serving life without parole for killing a sheriff's deputy in 2002.

The pair eluded more than 1,000 searchers who combed the thick woods and bogs of northern New York for much of the next three weeks. Matt was killed

by a border agent June 26. Sweat was wounded and captured by a state trooper two days later.

Mitchell admitted becoming close with the pair while she worked as an instructor in the prison tailor shop. She told investigators she agreed to be their getaway driver before backing out after suffering a panic attack. The escapees were forced to scrub plans to head to Mexico and instead fled on foot after emerging from a manhole.

Judge Kevin Ryan noted that the resulting search

disrupted life in a wide swath of the region for three weeks.

"A large portion of the local population were terrorized," he said.

"Many were forced to flee their homes."

Mitchell said she didn't tell anyone about the inmates' escape plan because Matt had threatened to harm her family, particularly her husband, Lyle, who also worked in the prison.

"I was fearful of Mr. Matt threatening to kill my husband and wanting to know where my son and mother live," she told the judge. □



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Shell move dims oil prospects, delights environmentalists



The Royal Dutch Shell PLC icebreaker Fennica heads up the Willamette River under protesters hanging from the St. Johns Bridge on its way to Alaska in Portland, Ore. (AP Photo/Don Ryan)

D. JOLING
J. FAHEY

Associated Press
ANCHORAGE, Alaska

(AP) — Royal Dutch Shell has abandoned its long quest to become the first company to produce oil in Alaska's Arctic waters, darkening the nation's long-term oil prospects and delighting environmental groups that tried to block the project. After years of effort, Shell is leaving the region "for

the foreseeable future" because it failed to find enough oil to make further drilling worthwhile. The company has spent more than \$7 billion on the effort, slogged through a regulatory gauntlet and fought environmental groups that feared a spill in the harsh climate would be difficult to clean up and devastating to polar bears, walruses, seals and other wildlife. Shell persisted in hopes of

finding a big new source of oil revenue and establishing expertise and a presence in the Arctic, which geologists estimate holds a quarter of the world's undiscovered conventional oil and gas. The drilling project also held the hopes of Alaska, which has seen oil production and revenues decline sharply in recent years, and the U.S. oil industry, which looked to Alaska's offshore Arctic as the next

source of oil big enough to keep the country among the top three oil producers in the world along with Saudi Arabia and Russia. But Shell drilled to 6,800 feet about 80 miles offshore in the Chukchi Sea off Alaska's northwest coast and just didn't find much.

"Shell continues to see important exploration potential in the basin, and the area is likely to ultimately be of strategic importance to Alaska and the U.S.," Marvin Odum, director of Shell's operations in the Americas, said in a statement issued late Sunday. "However, this is a clearly disappointing exploration outcome for this part of the basin."

Known in the industry as turning up a "dry hole," it's common for exploratory drilling to find little to no oil, especially in formations that have not been explored much in the past. But Shell's failure is notable because it was the only active drilling project in the sea, which Shell officials had called "a potential game-changer," a vast

untapped reservoir that could add to America's energy supply for 50 years. As recently as March, an Energy Department advisory council called for an immediate expansion of oil exploration in the American Arctic to avoid an increased reliance on imported oil in the future, in part because it would take more than a decade for oil in the Arctic to be discovered, developed and brought to market.

Charles Ebinger, senior fellow for the Brookings Institution Energy Security and Climate Initiative, said in an interview that a successful well by Shell would have been "a terribly big deal" because it would have attracted others to the region.

Though countries are pushing for cleaner energy sources, analysts predict that the world will need another 10 million barrels a day between 2030 and 2040 to meet growing demand, especially in developing countries, Ebinger said. The world now consumes 93.6 million barrels of oil every day. □

Qatar sovereign fund plans \$35 billion in US investments

ADAM SCHRECK
Associated Press

WASHINGTON/DUBAI, UAE(AP) — Qatar's government investment fund is making a big bet on the U.S. economy.

The OPEC member's Qatar Investment Authority said Monday it is opening an office in New York and is committed to investing \$35 billion in the United States over the next five years. The announcement represents a major vote of confidence by the sovereign wealth fund in the U.S., a key ally of the small

but energy-rich Gulf Arab nation. The new office will give the fund better access to investment partners and help it pursue its goal of diversifying its portfolio, the QIA said. "With boots on the ground, our presence in New York will anchor our interest in the region," Sheikh Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Saud Al Thani, the fund's chief executive, said in a statement. "It is the perfect location to help strengthen our existing relationships and promote new partner-

ships as we continue to expand geographically, diversify our assets and seek long term growth." The fund, founded in 2005, and other Qatari government-linked investors traditionally have invested heavily in Europe, snapping up headline-grabbing trophies such as stakes in prominent London properties and the Paris Saint-Germain soccer team. Well-known names in the QIA portfolio include Britain's iconic Harrods department store, stakes in

banks Barclays and Credit Suisse, and a chunk of the company that runs London's Heathrow Airport. The fund is also a major investor in Volkswagen AG. That investment that has lost billions of dollars in value in recent days as the German automaker's share price plunged after it admitted rigging diesel emissions to pass U.S. tests. The QIA's existing American holdings include a more than 10-percent stake in New York-based luxury jeweler Tiffany & Co. Government-backed Qa-

tar Airways, meanwhile, has been rapidly expanding the number of routes it flies to U.S. cities, provoking a backlash from American carriers.

Washington considers Qatar an important ally in the Arab world. The country's vast al-Udeid air base outside the capital, Doha, hosts American bombers, support aircraft and the forward headquarters for U.S. Central Command. The Sovereign Wealth Fund Institute estimates the QIA manages some \$256 billion in investments. □



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US Financial Front:

American consumer spending up 0.4 percent in August

MARTIN CRUTSINGER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. consumer spending rose at a healthy rate in August, while income growth slowed after a big jump in July.

Consumer spending advanced 0.4 percent compared to July, when spending also increased by 0.4 percent, the Commerce Department said Monday. In both months, the figures reflected strong gains in purchases of durable goods such as autos.

Consumer spending accounts for two-thirds of economic activity, and the latest result supports expectations for it to remain strong in the second half of this year. That should help serve as a buffer against a global slowdown that has hurt American manufacturers.

"Overall consumer spending remains robust and highlights a solid employment backdrop," said Bricklin Dwyer, an economist at BNP Paribas. "We expect firm spending ahead as employment remains solid and wages begin to accelerate."

Sal Guatieri, senior economist at BMO Capital Markets, said that the spending gains were broad, with consumers getting a boost in spending power from falling energy prices. He predicted that spending in the current July-September quarter would remain robust at an annual rate above 3 percent.

Personal income was up 0.3 percent in August, helped by another solid increase in wages and salaries. The result follows a 0.5 percent income gain in July, which had been the best showing in eight months.

The government on Friday issued its final estimate for

overall economic growth for the spring, saying the gross domestic product expanded at an annual rate of 3.9 percent in the April-June quarter.

That's a strong rebound from an anemic rate of 0.6 percent in the January-March period. Much of that bounce back reflects a surge in consumer spending, which grew at a 3.6 percent rate in the spring, double the rate in the winter.

Economists believe that overall growth has slowed to something around 2.2 percent to 2.5 percent in the current quarter. Yet they expect a modest acceleration in the final three months of this year, believing that strong gains in employment will provide people with more money to spend.

The slowdown in income growth in August meant that the saving rate slipped a bit to 4.6 percent of after-tax incomes, down from 4.7 percent in July.

An inflation gauge preferred by the Federal Reserve was unchanged in August, while core inflation excluding food and energy showed a tiny 0.1 percent increase. Over the past 12 months, prices have risen just 0.3 percent, and core inflation is up 1.3 percent. Both inflation measures are far below the Fed's target for annual price increases of 2 percent.

Fed officials passed up a chance at their September meeting to begin raising interest rates from the record low near zero, where they have been for nearly seven years. They noted that they wanted to wait given recent adverse developments that have roiled the global economy and financial markets. □



People shop the cosmetics section of the CityTarget store in Boston. U.S. consumer spending rose at a healthy rate in August, while income growth slowed after a big jump in July, the Commerce Department said Monday, Sept. 28, 2015.

(AP Photo/Michael Dwyer)

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EU operation ready to go after migrant smugglers

RAF CASERT
Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Union on Monday announced that it will be able to go after suspected migrant trafficking and smuggling vessels in the international waters of the Mediterranean as of next week. Monday's EU statement said Operation Sophia will allow naval personnel of EU nations "to board, search, seize and divert vessels suspected of being used for human smuggling or trafficking on the high seas, in line with international law" as of Oct. 7. In reaction to the tens of thousands of people crossing the Mediterranean and the thousands of lives lost, the EU set up an operation that initially centered on saving those drifting on the high seas and would later also include directly targeting smuggling and trafficking operations. The operation had been launched in June and since it reached operational capability on July 27, it has saved 2,186 people from drowning. EU member states now committed enough ships,



A Syrian refugee praises god as he arrives with others from Turkey on the shores of the Greek island of Lesbos, on a fishing boat. More than 260,000 asylum-seekers have arrived in Greece so far this year, most reaching the country's eastern islands on flimsy rafts or boats from the nearby Turkish coast.

(AP Photo/Petros Giannakouris)

helicopters and other military equipment to start the active phase of the counter-smuggling operation. "Today's decision takes the EU naval operation from its intelligence-gathering phase to its operational and active phase against human smugglers

on the high seas," EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said. EU officials also agreed to rename the EUNAVFOR Med operation "Sophia" after a baby born on a rescue ship this summer off the Libyan coast. As part of the rescue operation, four ships are de-

ployed at the moment and 1,318 people are working on the action involving 22 of the member states. It wasn't immediately clear by how many ships and personnel the enlarged mission, which includes counter-trafficking action, would be expanded. □

US backs Dutch resolution over Yemen probe

JAMEY KEATEN
Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — The United States supports Dutch efforts to create an international fact-finding mission on human rights abuses in war-torn Yemen, the U.S. ambassador to the top U.N. rights body said Monday, setting the stage for tough diplomatic negotiation on the issue with Saudi Arabia and other Arab states in coming days. The Dutch proposal to the U.N. Human Rights Council, which could expose abuses on all sides of the war, follows the submission of another one co-sponsored by Saudi Arabia and Yemen that does not seek an international mission. The U.S. has backed a blistering Saudi-led campaign of air strikes in Yemen, and Ambassador Keith Harper told The Associated Press on Monday that the U.S. ultimately hopes for a compromise.

The Dutch want the office of U.N. Human Rights chief Zeid Raad al-Hussein to send a mission to report on possible abuses and conflict-related crimes in Yemen. The council now faces separate votes on the two proposals before its three-week session ends on Friday, though diplomatic efforts are under way to overcome differences, officials said. In a text message to the AP, Harper said the U.S. supports the Dutch proposal, including the involvement of Zeid's office. □

Doctors see cold as new trial for asylum-seekers

A. COHADZIC,
I. SUBBOTOVSKA
Associated Press

BAPSKA, Croatia (AP) — Doctors treated migrant children — including newborns — for exposure as dropping temperatures Monday worsened the plight of asylum-seekers walking for days trying to reach sanctuary in Europe. One group of migrants crossed into Croatia near the small village of Bapska,

walking through cornfields and forests late Sunday to pass through a small gate that marks the border with Serbia. Vladimir Bozic, a physician from Doctors without Borders, said he had treated many young children for temperature-related illnesses. "We saw a 1-month old baby, even (one just) 15 days," Bozic said. Volunteers from the U.N.

High Commissioner from Refugees handed out blankets, warm drinks and food to those fleeing conflict and poverty in the Middle East, Africa and Asia. Many are suffering in rising numbers from colds and the flu after days or weeks on the move in the rain and the mud. "I expect even more, with the worsening of these cold conditions," Bozic said. "Winter is coming."

Migrants lined up at Croatia's Opatovac transit center Monday to take trains out the country. About 78,000 asylum seekers have crossed into Croatia since Sept. 15, when Hungary closed its border with Serbia, diverting the migrants to Croatia. Saed Al Mousawi, who fled from Afghanistan, said the drop in temperatures had made many feel unwell, especially the children. □

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Palestinians clash with Israeli riot police at holy site

IAN DEITCH

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Palestinians clashed with Israeli riot police after barricading themselves inside a mosque at Jerusalem's most sensitive holy site, throwing firebombs and rocks at officers outside during a major Jewish holiday on Monday.

The hilltop compound in Jerusalem's Old City is a frequent flashpoint and its fate is a core issue at the heart of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is known to Jews as the Temple Mount, site of the two biblical Jewish temples. Muslims revere it as the Noble Sanctuary, where they believe the Prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven there.

Police said young protesters barricaded themselves inside the Al-Aqsa mosque, despite an order permitting only men over the age of 50 from entering the compound for prayers. Israel has imposed the ban at times of unrest in the past as it is mostly young Palestinians who throw rocks at the holy site. Women of all ages are allowed to enter. Palestinians stockpiled rocks and other projectiles at the Al-Aqsa mosque overnight, according to police spokeswoman Luba Samri.

Police had tried to negotiate with the Waqf — the Islamic religious authority that oversees the compound — to call for calm, but talks failed and police entered the compound to seize the "dangerous devices intended to harm visitors to the site and police and endanger their lives," she said.

Palestinians threw rocks, firebombs and firecrackers from within the mosque at the police, Samri also said, adding that the fire bombs



A Palestinian woman flashes victory signs and shouts at ultra-Orthodox Jews during confrontations in the Old City of Jerusalem, Monday, Sept. 28, 2015. (AP Photo/Mahmoud Illean)

sparked a fire at the entrance to the mosque. Waqf guards did not prevent the "desecration of the sanctity of the place," she said.

Officers later managed to restore calm but sporadic Palestinian stone throwing persisted throughout the morning. By noon the site

was quiet, police said.

The director of Al-Aqsa Mosque, Omar Kiswani, blamed Israeli police for the violence.

"We asked the police yesterday not to allow any non-Muslim in the compound in these tense days, but police didn't respond positively to our demands,"

he said, adding that several people had suffered from tear gas inhalation.

The Mufti of Jerusalem, Mohammed Hussein, condemned Israel's actions against the protesters saying it will have "serious consequences."

"Israel is trying to divide the mosque between us

and Jews, the mosque is ours. It's an Islamic holy site and we will not let them do that," he said.

Jerusalem police chief Moshe Edri vowed to bring violent protesters to justice. "It is inconceivable that a group of rioters desecrate a holy place and endanger lives," he said.

It was the second day in a row of violence at the site. Monday's unrest occurred on the first day of Sukkot, a weeklong festival that celebrates the fall harvest and commemorates the wandering of the ancient Israelites through the desert following the exodus from Egypt.

In ancient times, Jews made pilgrimages to Jerusalem on Sukkot, and many Jews are expected to visit the city throughout the holiday period.

Rumors have swirled among Palestinians that Jews are planning to take over the holy site, which has fueled tensions. Those rumors were exacerbated earlier this month by calls from a group of religious Jews to visit the site on the eve of the Jewish New Year. □

Saudi forces kill 2, arrest 3 in anti-terror raids

A. AL-SHIHRI

Associated Press

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP)

— Saudi Arabia's Interior Ministry said Monday that security forces killed two suspected militants and arrested three others during a series of counterterrorism raids, who state-linked media said were part of an alleged Islamic State cell.

The official Saudi Press Agency carried the Interior Ministry statement, which said the simultaneous raids targeted sites around the capital, Riyadh, and in the

Eastern Province city of Dammam. All five suspects were identified as Saudi nationals.

The statement said one of the suspects had previously been imprisoned for three years after being repatriated from Iraq, though it did not specify if his imprisonment was for links to militant groups there.

The statement said the two suspects killed in the raids, which took place 12 days ago, had fired on security forces. The ministry said the five were planning an im-

minent attack inside the kingdom. Images broadcast on state TV and on local news websites show security forces retrieving weapons and bomb-making material from an underground hideout and from inside a residence. Several state-linked news websites, such as Al-Eqtisadiyah, reported the cell as belonging to the Islamic State group.

The privately-owned Saudi broadcaster Al-Arabiya said those targeted in the raid were linked to a sui-

cide bombing in the southwestern city of Abha. That Aug. 6 attack was claimed by a previously unknown Islamic State affiliate in the western region of Saudi Arabia.

The bomber targeted a mosque inside a police compound, killing 15 people, 11 of them security personnel. It was the deadliest attack on the kingdom's security forces in years.

Saudi Arabia is part of a U.S.-led coalition targeting the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria. □



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Spain: Tough talks loom for Catalonia pro-secession parties

CIARAN GILES
IAIN SULLIVAN
Associated Press
BARCELONA, Spain (AP)
 — Secessionist parties who agree on breaking Catalonia away from Spain but little else started preparing Monday for tough political negotiations aimed at forming a regional coalition government to push their independence agenda despite a warning from Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy that any separation attempt won't be permitted.

The separatist "Together for Yes" pro-independence alliance on Sunday won 62 seats in Catalonia's 135-member parliament, six short of a majority, forcing it to seek support from the Popular Unity Candidacy anti-establishment separatist party that detests Artur Mas, the regional leader who called the vote.

No meetings were set Monday but both sides said talks would begin soon to form a regional

government and pick its leader. The Popular Unity Candidacy party, known as CUP, won 10 seats and has lambasted Mas for invoking unpopular austerity measures.

Members said Monday they wouldn't support anyone to lead Catalonia's regional government linked to "cutbacks and corruption," a clear reference to Mas, who presided over cutbacks during Spain's years of economic hardship during the financial



The President of Democratic Convergence of Catalonia, Artur Mas, talks to journalists in Barcelona, Spain, Monday, Sept. 28, 2015.
 (AP Photo/Francisco Seco)

crisis.

While CUP leader David Fernandez promised his party will help the "Together for Yes" side because both share the common goal of independence, analysts predicted difficult negotiations. A new government isn't expected to be in place until November.

CUP is "in a tough spot: supporting Mas would antagonize its voter base, but forcing him to step down could paralyze the independence process," said Antonio Barroso, a London-based analyst with the Teneo Intelligence political risk consulting group.

Mas on Monday brushed off suggestions that his leadership was in question and insisted that under party agreements he has to be the regional presidential candidate.

He insisted the vote gave them a mandate to proceed with the independence drive and that they would work with CUP "to carry out the road map" and to put in place governmental structures needed for what he called "the legal disconnection" with

Spain.

Prior to the elections, Mas and his group had pledged to work for an independent state within 18 months, including a unilateral declaration of independence.

But CUP's main candidate, Antonio Banos, said Monday that such a declaration couldn't now be justified as it would have needed the backing of more than half the votes.

Under the 41-year-old Fernandez, CUP has succeeded regionally in tapping into the same anger at austerity measures exploited by far-left European parties like Syriza in Greece.

Catalans, he said in an interview with The Associated Press last week, need to claim their sovereignty as a nation from a Spanish state he sees as having little respect for Catalonia and is an enthusiastic participant in a global capitalist economy he labels as "a war machine that robs, kills and lies."

Anti-secession parties played up the fact that the pro-independence parties won just 48 percent of the popular vote. □



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Vietnam leader: China island work violates international law

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Vietnam's president told The Associated Press on Monday that China's island-building in the disputed South China Sea violates international law and endangers maritime security. President Truong Tan Sang also urged the U.S., which has expressed mounting concern over China's assertive behavior, to fully lift a ban on lethal weapons sales to Vietnam.

Sang said that would demonstrate to the world that U.S.-Vietnam relations have been fully normalized, 40 years after the end of the Vietnam War. Sang was speaking in an interview with The AP as world leaders gathered at the United Nations.

Communist-ruled Vietnam and China have long-standing fraternal ties but tensions have grown over oil exploration in disputed waters, and as China has undertaken massive land reclamation in the Spratly island chain, also claimed by Vietnam. "The East Sea is indeed a hot spot of the region and the world at this point, and in the last year China has done large-scale reclamation of submerged islands to make them very big islands," Sang said, using the name Hanoi uses for the South China Sea.

"We believe that these acts by China violate international law," he said, citing the U.N. convention of the law of the sea. He added that it also infringes a declaration of conduct reached in 2002 by members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. He said the concerns of Vietnam and other Southeast Asian nations are "obvious and easy to understand because the acts

by China seriously affect the maritime safety and security in the East Sea." He underscored the importance of a peaceful environment to realize new goals for sustainable development just agreed at the U.N. In Washington last week, China's President Xi Jinping said the Chinese have "the right to uphold our own sovereignty" in the South China Sea, where Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan, Brunei and Malaysia also have competing claims to tiny islands and reefs. China has reclaimed about 3,000 acres (1,200 hectares) of land in the past year-and-a-half by dredging sand from the ocean bed, and is building airstrips and other facilities that the U.S. is concerned could have military uses.

While Sang talked tough on China, he had warm words for the United States, and looked for further steps to cement stronger ties.

"The moment the United States fully lifts the ban on lethal weapons sales to Vietnam will send a signal to the whole world that the Vietnam-U.S. relations have been fully normalized" and there's no mistrust between the two nations, Sang said. A visit by President Barack Obama to Vietnam — possibly this fall, when the U.S. leader is due to visit the region — would also consolidate a comprehensive partnership formalized between the former enemies when Sang visited Washington in 2013, he said.

Last October, the U.S. announced it would allow sales, on a case-by-case basis, of lethal equipment to help the maritime security of Vietnam — easing a ban in place since communists took power at the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. But the Obama administra-



Vietnamese President Truong Tan Sang listens to questions during an interview, Monday, Sept. 28, 2015, in New York. Sang told The Associated Press on Monday that China's island-building in the disputed South China Sea violates international law and endangers maritime security.

(AP Photo/Julie Jacobson)

tion has said that Vietnam needs to improve human rights conditions for the relationship to reach its fullest potential.

U.S. lawmakers also feel that Hanoi should clean up its human rights act before getting privileges in the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal currently under negotiation. Vietnam is one of 12 nations in the agreement which appears close to completion. Sang expressed willingness to keep discussing human rights with the U.S. He said that a chapter on human rights is now included in Vietnam's constitution, and that implementing legislation would be enacted in the "next few years" so those rights are fully in place "on the ground." □

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OAS approves anti-corruption mission to work in Honduras

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Organization of American States announced an anti-corruption mission Monday to advise and supervise prosecutors in the Central American nation of Honduras.

Activists in Honduras have been demanding an international commission to root out government corruption, similar to a U.N. body

in neighboring Guatemala. Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernandez has been under pressure from a protest movement that began in May amid anger over a public health scandal.

Hernandez said Monday that the OAS mission will be "more integrated" than the U.N. agency in Guatemala, whose work led to the res-

ignation of that country's president in connection with a fraud scheme.

The Guatemala commission has the power to start investigations. It is unclear if Honduras' will.

OAS Secretary General Luis Almagro said a well-known jurist would be named to head the commission, but did not announce who. Leonidas Rosa Bautista,

Honduras' ambassador to the OAS, said candidates were still being reviewed for the spot.

The commission will include an international team of judges and prosecutors.

"We hope that the justice system will be an effective tool in the fight against impunity, that it will manage to gain the respect of the people of Honduras and

become an essential part of the democratic system," Almagro said.

Hernandez has acknowledged that his election campaign received financing from businesspeople linked to a social security embezzlement scandal that investigators allege involved millions of dollars misspent on marked-up goods and services. □

Argentine voters focused on economy, not corruption

A. CALATRAVA

Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina

(AP) — The corruption allegations against several top government officials are stunning: The convicted killer of three men alleges that the Cabinet chief ordered the hit, the vice president is being tried for bribery and authorities are investigating a possible money laundering scheme at a luxury hotel owned by President Cristina Fernandez.

In many nations, such alleged malfeasance would sink a party's chances in presidential elections. Not so in Argentina, where the poll leader ahead of the Oct. 25 vote, Daniel Scioli, is a stalwart of Fernandez's Justicialist Party and has largely run on its 12-year record.

The only opposition candidate campaigning on a platform of cracking down on bad-acting politicians, Sergio Massa, came in a distant third in August's open primaries.

"In this country, nobody



Argentina's Cabinet chief Anibal Fernandez, left, and President Cristina Fernandez attend a ceremony at the government house in Buenos Aires, Argentina. A politically charged climate, combined with a slow-moving and many argue inept justice system, makes it hard for average people to discern what's true, and easy for politicians accused of a crime to claim opponents are out to get them.
(AP Photo/Natasha Pisarenko)

loses sleep over corruption," said Patricio Giusto, an analyst with consulting firm Political Diagnostics.

For voters in Argentina, which has suffered periodic financial crises and has the dubious distinction of the largest default in world history, the top issues are crime and the economy. But there are other reasons

Argentines shrug when it comes to political wrongdoing.

A politically charged climate, combined with a slow-moving and many argue inept justice system, makes it hard for average people to discern what's true, and easy for politicians accused of a crime to claim opponents are out

to get them.

The South American nation of 41 million ranks 107 out of 174 on Transparency International's corruption perception index, scoring worse than other Latin American countries traditionally known for shady dealings, such as Mexico, Bolivia and Brazil.

"Corruption is inherent in

the culture," said Sergio Rojas, a 26-year-old who said he has not yet decided who he will vote for. Rojas added that Argentines often reconcile the problem by saying to themselves, "they are all thieves, so we have to vote for whoever robs the least."

A recent poll by the Center for Study of Public Opinion, a Buenos Aires-based think tank, found that voters' top issue was crime, closely followed by inflation and the economy. Corruption was a distant fourth.

When asked about the administration's scandals during a recent interview with The Associated Press, Scioli said the accusations were an indication that the opposition lacked good ideas.

Opposition candidates "are planting seeds of pessimism and discontent in Argentines, who don't want to go back but rather want to move forward," said Scioli, the governor of the Buenos Aires province and a former vice president. □

Venezuela, Guyana to restore ambassadors amid border dispute

RICARDO ZUNIGA

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) —

After a tense meeting, the presidents of Venezuela and Guyana agreed early this week to restore ambassadors and hold talks to resolve a long-running border dispute that flared up recently following the discovery of oil in disputed waters.

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and Guyanese President David Granger met for the first

time in New York in talks mediated by U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon during the world body's general assembly.

The current border between the South American countries was determined by international arbitration in 1899, but Venezuela has disputed that line for more than a half century and claims about 40 percent of Guyana's territory that is rich in gold, bauxite, diamonds and other natural resources. It extended its

maritime claims recently after a subsidiary of Exxon Mobil Corp. announced it made a significant oil discovery off Guyana's coast. The countries have been without ambassadors since earlier this year and tensions increased over the past week.

Guyana held military exercises around the country on Saturday, after it accused Venezuela of deploying troops to its border. Venezuelan officials have said only that troops were

conducting exercises in the country's east and Guyana said its troop movements were not aimed at inflaming the situation.

"For now the ambassadors are returning," Maduro told reporters after the meeting at U.N. headquarters. "I'm going to start to communicate, to call President Granger, until we have a close relationship and dialogue accompanied by our Caribbean brothers." A U.N. statement said the two presidents expressed

a "willingness to continue to engage in dialogue," and would receive their respective ambassadors for a return to full diplomatic representation.

Granger, in a video posted on the YouTube channel of Guyana's presidency, said Venezuela was the first to recall its ambassador and then didn't accept Guyana's nominee as ambassador to Caracas.

"All of the provocations come from the Venezuelans. □



Deloitte Hosts a Social Mixer at Tierra del Sol



ORANJESTAD -- Deloitte Dutch Caribbean entertained distinguished clients, guests and colleagues at a business event just recently, marking the successful conclusion of its fiscal year. The gardens and pool area at Tierra del Sol Golf Course and Country Club, served as backdrop for a much-enjoyed client-appreciation cocktail party with Audit, Consulting, Enterprise Risk Services, Financial Consulting and Tax experts, greetings and meeting guests. In his short welcome address partner Michael Leo van Romondt thanked his invitees for taking the time and attending the party. Deloitte Dutch Caribbean has been changing its direction and focus, he said, to become a broader service-organization, where the focus is on becoming trusted business partners to clients, on as many business levels, as possible. Deloitte experienced a

ple, and considers its human capital, most important. As he looks forward to a challenging year for the Aruban economy, with many unanswered questions regarding the measures to be taken in order to get the island's public finance in order, he shares the uncertainty in the public and acknowledges the many challenges clients will have to deal with in the near future.



successful 2014/2015 fiscal year, he stated, with an increased presence in the Aruba landscape, and growing its market-share above expectations, thanks to the positive contributions of a team of professionals and a smooth collaboration with Deloitte Netherlands, which adds value and quality to Deloitte's local products. Just like the island of Aruba, van Romondt continued, Deloitte Dutch Caribbean as a service driven business, depends on its peo-

But, challenging times, as you know, he reiterated, bring out the best in people and with creativity and outside the box thinking, a lot may be achieved. As areas of growth for Deloitte Dutch Caribbean, van Romondt introduced Maghalie Bunt, a leading expert and a partner specializing in Human Capital topics and stated that for Cyber Security, Deloitte is pleased to be the leader in the market, with the company's expert enterprise risk team, busy, helping keep a cyber secure Aruba.

The informal party under the stars was nicely catered by Tierra del Sol's banquet team, with bottomless cocktails and butler passed hors d'oeuvres while the Bamboo band provided excellent live music. Many of the pictures taken at the party may be viewed on the company's social media pages. □



Housekeeping Week Celebrated at Caribbean Palm Village Resort



NOORD – The Caribbean Palm Village Resort celebrated International Housekeeping Week, September 13th to 19th, with a slew of activities designed to entertain, reward and distinguish members of that hard working department. International Housekeeping Week, IEHA, is celebrated worldwide since 1981, as one week is set aside for all to focus attention and recognition on the professional housekeepers working in hotels, resorts and other public facilities, maintaining a cleaner, safer, healthier environment for us all each and every day. At Caribbean Palm Village Resort the week started with a religious mass service after which some hilarious sport competitions

were staged on the tennis court. Later in the week bingo was hosted featuring many prizes. Other activities included a fun beer chugging contest, a Karaoke show-down and a Zumba dance exercise session with Mislady Fingal, followed by a lecture about Environmental Safety and a session with the local BOB Foundation regarding breast cancer. An afternoon with the White and Yellow Cross, Wit Gele Kruis, for a health check, concluded the varied and action packed week. Seen in our photos, the Olympic games, Bingo, Beer contest with winner Janeth Herrera, and other winners Jael Kock, Miladys Sarmiento, Obdalis Farro, and Magalis Richardson. □



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Loyal Visitors Honored at the Divi Village Beach Resort



PALM BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a group of loyal and friendly Visitors of Aruba at the Divi Village Beach Resort as Distinguished Visitors and Goodwill Ambassadors. The symbolic honorary titles are presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 10-to-19

and 20-to-35 consecutive years. The honorees were Mr. Dave and Mrs. Nancy Uber and Mrs. Shari Colvin Daignault as Distinguished Visitors, and Mr. Lester and Mrs. Katherine Colvin as Goodwill Ambassadors. All the honorees hail from New York and are loyal members of the Divi Village. They love Aruba very much because of the friendly people, the

weather, the beaches, the restaurants and casinos, and they say Aruba feels like paradise and the people are like a family to them. The certificates were presented by Ms. Darline de Cuba representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Mrs. Gloria Defoe, Ms. Dana Arendsz and Ms. Nadia Dabboussi of the Divi Village Beach Resort. □

Loyal Visitors Honored by ATA at the Aruba Beach Club



PALM BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a group of loyal and friendly Visitors of Aruba at the Aruba Beach Club as Goodwill Ambassadors. The symbolic hon-



orary titles are presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 20-to-35 consecutive years. The honorees were Mr. Clarence and Mrs. Mary

Card of Bedford, Massachusetts, Mrs. Rosemary Luytjes of The Villages, Florida, and Mrs. Ann Trupiano of Gloucester, Massachusetts. All the honorees are loyal members of the Aruba



Beach Club and they love Aruba very much because of the friendly people, the weather, the beaches, the restaurants and casinos. They say Aruba feels like paradise and the people are like a

family to them. The certificates were presented by Ms. Darline de Cuba representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Mrs. Kenia Brito of the Aruba Beach Club. □

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NL Capsules Nationals' teammates Papelbon, Harper brawl during loss

WASHINGTON (AP) — Nationals outfielder Bryce Harper and closer Jonathan Papelbon got into a dugout fight a day after Washington was eliminated from playoff contention, tangling in the eighth inning Sunday of a 12-5 loss to last-place Philadelphia. In the ninth, Papelbon (4-3) gave up Andres Blanco's go-ahead homer as the Phillies scored eight times. Harper, the National League Most Valuable Player front-runner, flew out in the eighth with the score 4-all. As he returned to the dugout, he exchanged words with Papelbon, who was acquired from Philadelphia in July to help with a possible postseason push. Papelbon then reached for Harper's throat with his left hand and shoved the outfielder back toward the bench with both arms. Teammates pulled the pair apart. Harper was replaced in right field for the ninth. Dalier Hinojosa (2-0) earned the win.

CUBS 4, PIRATES 0

CHICAGO (AP) — Jake Arrieta pitched seven dominant innings and also homered in his MLB-best 21st win, and Chicago stopped Pittsburgh's winning streak at eight games. Arrieta (21-6) retired his first 18 batters before Gregory Polanco grounded a leadoff single into left field in the seventh. The right-hander homered in the second and struck out nine while improving to 15-1 with a dazzling 0.89 ERA in his last 19 starts.

Continued on Page 22

JORDAN RULES

Spieth crowned PGA Player of the Year

Jordan Spieth chips to the green on the fourth hole in the final round of the Tour Championship golf tournament at East Lake Golf Club Sunday, Sept. 27, 2015, in Atlanta.

Associated Press
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A ribbon on a remarkable year for Jordan Spieth

BY DOUG FERGUSON
AP GOLF WRITER

ATLANTA (AP) -- Jordan Spieth took possession of his final two trophies on the deck of a hospitality chalet that overlooked the 18th green at East Lake. He turned to raise them to a crowd gathered below, and camera flashes under a gloomy sky made it feel like a rock concert.

Before long, he could hear the steady chant of "Jordan! Jordan!" from kids next to the clubhouse wanting his autograph.

The majors over, this was all he cared about. A victory in the Tour Championship meant his name on the FedEx Cup trophy, a \$10 million bonus, a sweep of all the important awards and no argument on who was the best in golf this year. "This one," he said, "I cannot wait to celebrate."

Make it quick.

The new PGA Tour season for some players begins in 17 days in California, and for Spieth in about six weeks in Shanghai.

He found out during the FedEx Cup playoffs, which he began by missing back-to-back cuts for the first time in his young career, that being billed as the next great thing only lasts until someone else does something better.

Spieth won the Masters and U.S. Open, the first time someone won back-to-back majors since, well, last year. Rory McIlroy won the British Open and the PGA Championship, with a World Golf Championship in between. Spieth set a PGA Tour record with just over \$12 million in earnings, which comes out to \$481,218 for each of the 25 tournaments he played. McIlroy, who splits time between the PGA Tour and European Tour, averaged \$487,064 in his 17 tour starts last year.

Absolutely, Spieth needs to celebrate a season that was off the charts in so many ways. But it doesn't get any easier from here.

The reason some players, such as Bubba Watson and Rickie Fowler, wanted to wait until the end of the Tour Championship before decid-

ing on PGA Tour player of the year was because of Jason Day. Had he won at East Lake, that would have given Day six wins this year, including a major and three FedEx Cup playoff events against strong fields.

So the way Spieth closed out the season was important on more than just 10 million levels.

Still, it was another reminder not only that Spieth's season was in-

So what does he do for an encore? "I don't know how we sit down and try to improve on it, but we're going to try," Spieth said.

Spieth became only the 19th player in 120 years to win multiple majors in one season. Seven players did it more than once, with Nicklaus (five times) and Tiger Woods (four times) leading the way. But only eight players have followed a year of multiple majors by even

Ryder Cup.

What doesn't get enough attention is the way he won the Australian Open late last year, closing with one of the best rounds he ever played. What also doesn't get enough attention are two tournaments he lost.

Jimmy Walker should have been able to soak up an easy victory at the Valero Texan Open this year, except that he had to birdie two



Jordan Spieth poses with the trophies after winning the Tour Championship golf tournament and the FedEx Cup at East Lake Golf Club on Sunday, Sept. 27, 2015, in Atlanta.
Associated Press

credible, but that it will require no less work, no less magic, to do it again. Not since 1973, with Jack Nicklaus (seven wins) and Tom Weiskopf (five), have two players won at least five PGA Tour events in one season.

Spieth, Day and McIlroy are in a close race for No. 1, and they are just as close in Las Vegas. The Westgate Las Vegas Superbook lists Spieth at 6-1 to win the Masters next year, followed by McIlroy and Day at 7-1. The next best odds fall to Dustin Johnson and Watson at 15-1.

winning one major. There are no flukes on that list - Woods (three times), Nicklaus (twice), Gene Sarazen (twice), Walter Hagen, Bobby Jones, Arnold Palmer, Lee Trevino and Tom Watson.

Expectations will be higher than ever, and maybe they should be. It's worth remembering that at this time a year ago, Spieth had one professional victory and had dropped out of contention from the final group at the Masters and The Players Championship. He lost an early lead in his singles match against Graeme McDowell in the

holes and save par with another putt down the stretch because Spieth ran off four straight birdies. The other was the British Open, where Spieth handled the enormous weight of going for the Grand Slam by missing a playoff by one shot. He has the Presidents Cup next week, and the HSBC Champions might be little more than a victory lap for a year he won't forget. He has title defenses in Australia and the Bahamas late in the year. And then he gets to start all over. This leisure sport can be hard work. □

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NFL Capsules

Pittsburgh loses Roethlisberger in 12-6 win over St. Louis

The Associated Press

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Ben Roethlisberger was carted off the field with a knee injury in the second half and Pittsburgh's defense came through to give the Steelers a 12-6 victory over the St. Louis Rams on Sunday.

Le'Veon Bell scored from a yard out in the first half in his first game back after a suspension, but the Steelers' focus will be on the status of their star quarterback. Roethlisberger's leg got caught underneath him on a diving, sliding sack by Mark Barron.

There was no immediate word on the extent of Roethlisberger's injury.

Will Allen's interception with 1:56 left set up a field goal by Josh Scobee to put Pittsburgh (2-1) ahead by six points.

FALCONS 39, COWBOYS 28
 ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — Matt Ryan and Julio Jones connected for two touchdowns and Devonta Freeman ran for 141 yards and three scores as Atlanta beat Dallas in the Cowboys' first game without Tony Romo and Dez Bryant. Freeman's third score early in the fourth quarter capped a rally from a trio of 14-point deficits for the Falcons (3-0), who didn't win their third game until Week 10 last year, and Week 13 in 2013.

Jones had his third straight 100-yard game to start the season, finishing with 164 and a clinching 2-yard score in the fourth quarter. The Cowboys (2-1) had a six-game winning streak in the regular season broken in backup quarterback Brandon Weeden's ninth straight loss as a starter.

Weeden completed his first 16 passes to start the sea-



Roethlisberger holds his leg after being injured during the third quarter of an NFL football game against the St. Louis Rams, Sunday, Sept. 27, 2015, in St. Louis.

son, but the run ended with a second-quarter interception that turned the game in the Falcons' favor.

PATRIOTS 51, JAGUARS 17
 FOXBOROUGH, Massachusetts (AP) — Tom Brady became the fourth quarterback in NFL history to throw 400 touchdown passes, connecting for a pair of scores.

Brady completed a 1-yard TD pass to Danny Amendola in the second quarter and added a 13-yard touchdown to Keshawn Martin in the third. In all, Brady completed 33 of 42 passes for 358 yards.

Rob Gronkowski caught four passes for 101 yards for the Patriots (3-0). LeGarrette Blount ran for three 1-yard touchdowns.

It was the most points ever allowed by the Jaguars (1-2).

SEAHAWKS 26, BEARS 0

SEATTLE (AP) — Tyler Lockett returned the second-half kickoff 105 yards for a touchdown, Russell Wilson connected with Jimmy

Graham on a 30-yard TD, and the Seahawks routed the undermanned Bears. Seattle led just 6-0 at half-time, but Lockett started a huge second half as he went untouched on a perfectly executed return, the longest in franchise history. Later in the quarter, Wilson found Graham across the middle for his second touchdown catch this season.

Steven Hauschka added four field goals and the Seahawks started the process of erasing an 0-2 start. Chicago (0-3) was shut out for the first time since 2002 and the fourth time since 1990. Jimmy Clausen started at quarterback in place of Jay Cutler and was 9 of 17 for 63 yards.

CARDINALS 47, 49ERS 7

GLENDALE, Arizona (AP) — Carson Palmer threw for 311 yards and Arizona returned two of Colin Kaepernick's first four passes for touchdowns.

Larry Fitzgerald caught nine passes for 134 yards

and two touchdowns and Chris Johnson rushed for 110 yards and two scores for the Cardinals (3-0), who won at Chicago 48-23 last week.

It's the first time the franchise has had two 40-point victories in a row since 1969 and its largest margin of victory since a 44-0 win over Houston in 1970.

Kaepernick threw a career-worst four interceptions, two by Tyrann Mathieu, and finished 9 for 19 for 67 yards.

BRONCOS 24, LIONS 12

DETROIT (AP) — Peyton Manning converted a fourth down with a 45-yard touchdown pass to Demaryius Thomas with 5 seconds left in the first half, and threw an 11-yard TD pass to Owen Daniels with 2:28 remaining to lead Denver to victory.

The last time the Broncos (3-0) won their first three games was in 2013, when they reached the Super Bowl. The Lions (0-3) are off to their worst start since

2010, when they finished 6-10.

Aqib Talib blocked an extra-point kick early in the second quarter to keep Denver's one-point lead. The Broncos later stopped a 2-point conversion run, keeping them ahead 14-12 early in the third quarter. Matthew Stafford had three turnovers, including a fumble and interception at midfield in the fourth quarter.

BILLS 41, DOLPHINS 14

MIAMI GARDENS, Florida (AP) — Tyrod Taylor threw for 277 yards and three scores in his first NFL road start. The Bills totaled 429 yards, intercepted Ryan Tannehill three times in the first half, and led 27-0 before Miami scored late in the third quarter.

Buffalo (2-1) bounced back from a dismal loss at home to New England. The Dolphins (1-2), who began the season with high hopes of ending a seven-year playoff drought, fell into last place in the AFC East with their second consecutive loss.

The Bills improved to 5-2 against Miami over the past four years. They're 18-26 against everyone else during that span.

The victory was especially sweet for former Dolphins Richie Incognito and Charles Clay, who were co-captains for Buffalo.

TEXANS 19, BUCCANEERS 9

HOUSTON (AP) — Ryan Mallett threw for 228 yards and a touchdown and Alfred Blue had 139 yards rushing for Houston's first win of the season.

Mallett gave Houston (1-2) the lead on a 5-yard touchdown pass to DeAndre Hopkins on the opening drive. □

AL Capsules

Astros beat Rangers 4-2 to tighten AL West race

HOUSTON (AP) — Dallas Keuchel (19-8) improved to 15-0 at home this season, striking out 10 while giving up one run and two hits in seven innings. Houston maintained a half-game lead over the Los Angeles Angels for the second American League wild card and closed with in 2 1/2 games of AL West-leading Texas.

Luke Gregerson threw a perfect ninth for his 29th save.

Martin Perez (3-6) allowed two runs — both unearned — and five hits in six innings.

ANGELS 3, MARINERS 2

ANAHEIM, California (AP) — Kole Calhoun singled in the tiebreaking run in the eighth after Carson Smith relieved Hisashi Iwakuma (9-5), and Los Angeles won its fifth straight.

David Freese homered in the fifth for the Angels (81-74), who remained a half-game behind Houston. Los Angeles also moved just three games behind the Rangers, with four games in Texas to end the season. Pinch-hitter Mark Trumbo hit a tying homer off Fernando Salas (5-2) in the eighth for the Mariners (74-82), who were mathematically eliminated Sunday. Seattle lost its final five road games and ensured its fifth losing season in six years.

TWINS 7, TIGERS 1

DETROIT (AP) — Byron Buxton doubled and homered for Minnesota, which won for the fifth time in seven games and remained 1 1/2 games behind Houston. Ervin Santana (7-4) allow-

ing one run and six hits in seven innings.

Detroit, which is last in the AL Central, finished 38-43 at Comerica Park, its worst home record since 2004. Randy Wolf (0-5) gave up six runs and seven hits in 1 1-3 innings.

ROYALS 3, INDIANS 0

KANSAS CITY, Missouri (AP) — A day after his father died, Chris Young (11-6) pitched five no-hit innings in his first start after nearly two months in the bullpen, then caught a flight to Dallas to be with his family before the game ended.

After Danny Duffy struck out two in a perfect sixth for the AL Central champion Royals, Francisco Lindor bunted for a single on Ryan Madson's first pitch.

A day after climbing above .500 for the first time since April 9, the Indians (77-77) fell four games behind Houston.

Kelvin Herrera worked a flawless eighth, and Wade Davis gave up a double to Jason Kipnis in the ninth as he finished the two-hitter for his 14th save.

Kansas City took a 2-0 lead in the fourth against Danny Salazar (13-10) when Eric Hosmer hit an RBI double and scored on Mike Moustakas' groundout.

RED SOX 2, ORIOLES 0

BOSTON (AP) — Henry Owens (4-3) gave up three hits in 7 2-3 innings, Blake Swihart hit a solo homer and Boston completed a three-game sweep that included three shutouts. Robbie Ross Jr. worked the ninth for his sixth save.



Houston Astros' Dallas Keuchel delivers a pitch against the Texas Rangers in the sixth inning of a baseball game, Sunday, Sept. 27, 2015, in Houston.

Associated Press



Baltimore (76-79) fell 5 1/2 games back of Houston.

YANKEES 6, WHITE SOX 1

NEW YORK (AP) — Luis Severino (5-3) pitched five-hit ball for six innings, Dustin Ackley homered off Erik Johnson (3-1) to lift New York's late-waking offense and New York cut its magic number for clinching at least a wild card to three.

Severino (5-3) induced three double plays in shutting down the White Sox in his 10th big league start, helping the Yankees move

within one of the franchise's 10,000th regular-season victory.

BLUE JAYS 5, RAYS 4

TORONTO (AP) — Josh Donaldson hit a solo homer off Steve Geltz (2-6) with two outs in the ninth, his 41st this year.

Justin Smoak had three hits, including a two-run homer. The Blue Jays, headed to the postseason for the first time since 1993, finished an AL-best 53-28 at home.

Brett Cecil (4-5) pitched the ninth before Toronto's

27th home sellout of the season and 12th straight. The Blue Jays sold out 20 of their final 21 home games and drew 2,794,891 at home, their most since 1995.

In other AL games it was N.Y. Yankees 6, Chicago White Sox 1; Toronto 5, Tampa Bay 4; Minnesota 7, Detroit 1; Boston 2, Baltimore 0; Kansas City 3, Cleveland 0; Houston 4, Texas 2; L.A. Angels 3, Seattle 2; and San Francisco 5, Oakland 4. □

WNBA Playoffs

Maya Moore carries Lynx to Finals; Fever top Liberty



Phoenix Mercury's Brittney Griner (42) reacts to picking up her fourth foul against the Minnesota Lynx, during Game 2 of the WNBA basketball Western Conference finals, Sunday, Sept. 27, 2015, in Phoenix. Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Maya Moore stole Noelle Quinn's pass with 3 seconds left and made a free throw with 1.5 seconds to go to give Minnesota a 72-71 victory over the Phoenix Mercury on Sunday, sending the Lynx to the WNBA Finals with a two-game sweep in the Western Conference series. In the Eastern Conference finals, Tamika Catchings scored 16 of her 25 points in the second half to rally the Indiana Fever to a 70-64 win over the New

York Liberty in Game 2 and even the series at one game apiece. Moore had career playoff-high 40 points to help Minnesota reach the title series for the fourth time in five seasons. Minnesota won the title in 2011 and 2013. "Four times in five years in the Finals, it's not easy for these players," Lynx coach Cheryl Reeve said, "especially when the expectation is every time they play, they should win the game." With the teams tied at 71,

Moore blocked and controlled Quinn's pass attempt to Brittney Griner. She was then fouled by Quinn, made the first three throw and the Lynx rebounded the miss on the second as time ran out. Candice Dupree led the defending champion Mercury with 16 points. In Indianapolis, the Fever trailed by 15 in the second half until the 36-year-old Catchings took over to level the series. It was the Fever's seventh

win in their last nine elimination games. Shenise Johnson finished with 12 points and Shavonte Zellous and Marissa Coleman added 10 for Indiana. New York's Tina Charles led all scorers with 25 points — including 17 in the first half — and had 10 rebounds. Epiphany Prince added 12 points for the Liberty, who led 44-29 at halftime.

Top-seeded New York seemed in control through three quarters, but after Charles made a jumper to give the Liberty a 55-42 advantage early in the fourth, Catchings and the Fever went to work on a 13-0 run. Catchings has six points and two assists in the spurt. The decisive Game 3 will be played Tuesday night in New York. □

Las Vegas, Quebec City set to take step in NHL expansion bid

LARRY LAGE
AP Hockey Writer

Las Vegas and Quebec City are moving closer in their bids to land a NHL franchise.

A Bill Foley-led group and Montreal-based communications giant Quebecor are in the third and final stage of a process to potentially bring the world's top hockey league to Las Vegas and Quebec City, respectively.

"They have been invited to make presentations to the Executive Committee on Tuesday," NHL Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly wrote in an email.

Later in the day, the com-

mittee will report to the NHL Board of Governors.

"Evaluation process will continue," Daly wrote. "No defined timeline."

Quebecor spokesman Martin Tremblay and Michelle Kersch, spokeswoman for Foley's group, confirmed their groups will make a presentation.

NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman said earlier this month the league is "not feeling any timeline pressure," in the expansion process. Bettman has proposed an expansion fee of \$500 million, a significant jump from the \$80 million fee paid by the Columbus Blue Jackets and Minneso-

ta Wild, when the NHL last expanded to 30 teams in 2000.

It is expected to take at least two years before the NHL would potentially have 32 teams playing.

The league has examined each market and both groups' arena plans after they were the chosen two out of 16 expansion applicants. As part of the process, both groups submitted a \$10 million down payment, \$2 million of which was nonrefundable. An NHL franchise in Las Vegas would be the first for any of the major sports leagues in the city. □

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Cycling world champ Sagan casts spotlight on migrant crisis

DAVE SKRETTA

AP Sports Writer

RICHMOND, Virginia (AP)

— Peter Sagan had just climbed to the top of the podium at cycling's world championships on Sunday when the Slovakian star turned the spotlight on issues far greater than a bike race.

Might as well use that podium as a pulpit, after all.

Thousands of migrants fleeing war and poverty in the Middle East, Africa and Asia have flooded through the Balkans and into Western Europe over the past year, creating tensions among nations trying to respond to the crisis. The situation has turned many people into nomads, searching not only for borders willing to let them cross, but a country willing to give them a fresh start.

"We live in the moment now," Sagan said, "but maybe in the future, I don't know. Maybe we're not here. That is why it's important. I want to tell the people thinking about how we're going to change the world — OK, one man, maybe nothing, but if we have more, we can change."

The 25-year-old Sagan was born in the former Czecho-



Peter Sagan, of Slovakia, celebrates winning the UCI Elite Men's Road World Championship Cycling race in Richmond, Va., Sunday, Sept. 27, 2015.

Associated Press

slovakia less than a year after the Velvet Revolution restored democracy in the country. Though he was still an infant when the nation peacefully separated into

the Czech Republic and Slovakia, his family lived through turbulent times. Perhaps it was no surprise that such world issues weighed on his mind Sun-

day.

"I told Kate, my girlfriend, if I win the rainbow jersey, I want to tell this so people are thinking about the future," Sagan said, "and that we have to change something."

In many ways, Sagan has become the new face of cycling. He's young, charismatic and exciting, capable of winning any kind of race — a flat-out sprint or over a punchy course like he found at the world championships. His flair for the dramatic has endeared Sagan to older fans who weathered the doping scandals of Lance Armstrong and others, and young fans only learning about the sport.

His relationship with fans was on full display in Richmond, where Sagan in some ways became an adopted American. Fans lining the course shouted his name, urging him on during the decisive final lap, and roared their approval when he rode hands-free across the finish line.

Sagan responded by flipping his helmet into the crowd and raising his arms in triumph.

The victory was also validation for Sagan, who was

near the front in every race he competed in this season, but always seemed to come up short. Those second- and third-place finishes even began to draw the ire of his trade team owner, who lamented about how much Sagan was getting paid.

Never mind that Sagan won two stages and the overall title at the Tour of California, or his fourth straight green jersey as the top sprinter at the Tour de France.

"I was winning a lot, and it got boring for the people and the riders," he said jokingly, when pressed on all his near-misses. "I'm always fighting. In the Tour de France and this year at some of the classics, I was at the front but just not the best."

There was no disputing he was the best on Sunday. Sagan hid safely in the peloton as riders kept attacking throughout the 260-kilometer race, only popping to the front in the last few kilometers. On the penultimate climb, Sagan jumped to the front and roared away, getting into an aerodynamic tuck to leave the rest of the field behind. □

Continued from Page 17

Pittsburgh (95-61) and Chicago (90-65) each have clinched playoff spots and lead the NL wild-card standings, so the Pirates could see Arrieta again in the first game of the post-season on Oct. 7.

The Pirates could still catch St. Louis for the NL Central title. They trail the Cardinals by three games and open a three-game series at home against St. Louis on Monday.

A.J. Burnett (9-6) pitched six effective innings.

METS 8, REDS 1

CINCINNATI (AP) — Jacob deGrom (14-8) gave up one run and five hits and struck out nine over six innings in his first outing since Sept. 15 — he had been skipped over in the rotation to rest.

A day after clinching the



Washington Nationals relief pitcher Jonathan Papelbon delivers in the eighth inning of a baseball game against the Philadelphia Phillies at Nationals Park, in Washington, Sunday, Sept. 27, 2015. Papelbon got into a dugout fight with teammate Bryce Harper during the inning. The Phillies won 12-5.

Associated Press

NL East title for their first postseason berth since 2006, the Mets rested their regulars but still completed the first season sweep by either team since New York started play in 1962, going

7-0 against Cincinnati. The Mets outscored the Reds 36-12 in these four games at Great American Ball Park and extended their club-record road winning streak to 11.

Keyvius Sampson (2-6) lost his fifth straight start, allowing five runs — three earned — and nine hits in 2 2-3 innings. Last-place Cincinnati has lost eight in a row, one shy of its season high.

MARLINS 9, BRAVES 5

MIAMI (AP) — Justin Bour homered twice and drove in three runs as Miami completed a three-game sweep. Bour was 7 for 12 in the series with four homers and eight RBIs.

Martin Prado drove in three runs and Marcell Ozuna also homered for Miami, which has won a team-best seven consecutive games against the Braves. Tom Koehler (11-14) allowed four runs, nine hits, and five walks in 6 2-3 innings. Shelby Miller (5-17) gave up seven runs — four earned — and seven hits in 5 1-3 innings. He is 0-16 in 24

starts since May 17.

BREWERS 8, CARDINALS 4

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Pinch-hitter Jason Rogers had a ninth-inning grand slam off Trevor Rosenthal (2-4), who had converted 47 of 49 previous save chances.

The Cardinals' NL Central lead was cut to 2 1/2 games over Pittsburgh.

Khris Davis homered twice and drove in four runs for the Brewers, who scored seven runs in the ninth.

David Goforth (1-0) pitched one inning, and Francisco Rodriguez got his 37th save when he retired Brandon Moss with two on.

ROCKIES 12, DODGERS 5

DENVER (AP) — Nolan Arenado had a career-high five RBIs, including a three-run homer, and Colorado completed a three-game series that kept Los Angeles' magic number at two for its third straight NL West title. □

Get Started: Chip card fraud liability deadline days away

JOYCE M. ROSENBERG

AP Business Writer

APPROACHING DEADLINE

Starting Thursday, businesses that accept credit cards must be prepared to handle transactions with new chip-embedded cards or find themselves paying the bill in the event of fraud.

The credit card industry set Oct. 1 as the day when liability for fraud committed with the new cards will shift to retailers and other businesses if they don't have equipment to process chip card transactions. The chips in the cards are harder to counterfeit than the magnetic stripes on millions of cards, but they require new card readers and software to process transactions.

If a counterfeit card is used in a transaction and a business doesn't have the new equipment, the company will be liable for the financial losses it suffers.

However, little is expected to change on Thursday at many small businesses. A number of banks and oth-

er card issuers still haven't sent the new cards to their customers, who will continue to use their magnetic stripe cards.

It's expected that millions of the older cards will still be in use going into 2016. And at least for the time being, it's not expected that thieves will have figured out how to copy the information on the chips.

Although many national retailers have upgraded their equipment, many small businesses haven't. A Wells Fargo & Co. survey taken during the summer showed that only about half of small business owners were aware of Oct. 1 deadline.

Only about a third had the new equipment and less than a third said they planned to get it by the deadline. Over time, many companies may feel more pressure to update their equipment.

The simplest card readers are expected to cost at least \$100, and the most basic software starts at several hundred dollars. □

Apple sells 13 million new iPhones in 3 days

MAE ANDERSON

AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Apple says it sold more than 13 million iPhone 6s and 6s Plus phones in the three days since its iPhone launch, topping last year's early sales mark.

Apple sold 10 million iPhone 6 and 6 Plus models during their first weekend last year. This year's results include sales in China which was included in the initial launch for the first time.

Apple said previously that preorders were so strong that it expected to surpass last year's record.

PiperJaffray analyst Gene Munster said results came in at the high end of his expectations for sales of 12 million to 13 million. He estimates China added about 2 million in sales.

"Today's news suggests the iPhone 6 cycle is off to a good start," he wrote.

The new models have more memory and faster processors, along with a new 12 mega-pixel camera, and starts at \$649. Apple and wireless service providers are also offering leasing and monthly installment plans. Cupertino, California-based Apple Inc. says the phones will be available in 40 additional countries beginning Oct. 9 including Italy, Mexico, Russia, Spain and Taiwan and 130 countries by the end of the year. Apple said sales completed by Sept. 26 will be included in Apple's fiscal fourth quarter results, and sales completed on Sunday, Sept. 27 will be included in Apple's first-quarter 2016 results. □



John Carmack, Chief Technical Officer of Oculus, speaks during the Oculus 2 conference in Los Angeles, Thursday, Sept. 24, 2015.

Associated Press

Oculus takes aim at mainstream with inexpensive gear, video

RYAN NAKASHIMA

AP Business Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Virtual reality is taking a few steps closer to the mainstream with Samsung unveiling a headset that brings the technology to its latest smartphones at half the price of its previous model, Facebook launching support for 360-degree video, and online video services like Netflix and Hulu jumping into the format.

The announcements at a developers conference in Los Angeles for virtual reality technology company Oculus represent attempts to push the platform beyond a video-gamer-focused niche.

Facebook Inc. CEO Mark Zuckerberg, who cut a deal to buy Oculus for \$2 billion last year, told some 1,500 conference attendees Thursday that virtual reality is "the next logical step" in online sharing after text, photos and video.

"In just a few years, VR has gone from being this sci-

ence fiction dream to an awesome reality," he said. "And now we all here have a chance to change the way we play, communicate and collaborate." Zuckerberg showed off a promo for the upcoming "Star Wars" movie showing a speeding vehicle zooming over the desert landscape of fictional planet Jakku. Users can look around in any direction using their mouse as the video is playing.

Samsung said its new virtual reality headset will be 22 percent lighter and cost \$99, half the price of its previous model. The Gear VR, which requires users to insert the latest version of a Samsung smartphone into the headset, will ship in November.

Netflix content is available to be viewed in Oculus or Samsung headsets starting Thursday, while Hulu said it would also bring its app to the Oculus platform where users can stream 2-D content as well as an original virtual reality short film called "The Big One," from YouTube star Freddie Wong's RocketJump production company. A Hulu launch date wasn't announced.

Meanwhile, Oculus said it would begin a certification program so consumers can look for a sticker that will identify which computers support its Oculus Rift headset, which is due to come out early next year. Asus, Dell and Alienware will have certified models that cost less than \$1,000. □

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Wall Street falls sharply on China growth worries

STEVE ROTHWELL
AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Ongoing worries about the health of the Chinese economy and another big sell-off in drugmakers pushed the stock market back toward its lowest level of the year.

Energy and raw material companies dropped on reports that industrial profits at Chinese companies fell sharply in August, heightening worries about a slowdown in the world's second-biggest economy. Health care stocks fell sharply as drugmakers extended a decline that began last week.

Stocks have fallen sharply in August and September on concern that a slowdown in China is worse than previously thought and is spreading to other emerging market economies. The slowdown could start hurting U.S. companies that rely on overseas demand for a large portion of their profits. "Whenever the market is down, the first place to look these days is China," said John Manley, chief equity strategist at Wells Fargo Fund Management. "Right now, we need evidence that China is not slowing that much and that profits are still going to be OK."

The Standard & Poor's 500 index slipped 49.57 points, or 2.6 percent, to 1,881.77. The index is now 14 points above its lowest level of the year, set Aug. 25.

The Dow Jones industrial average lost 312.78 points, or 1.9 percent, to 16,001.89. The Nasdaq composite

slumped 142.53 points, or 3 percent, to 4,543.97.

Monday's slump put the S&P 500 index back in a "correction," a Wall Street term meaning a drop of 10 percent or more from a recent peak. The index is

lik chief market strategist at Boston Private Wealth.

Health care stocks are another weak link in the market. A sell-off in drugmakers extended into a second week. The Nasdaq Biotechnology index dropped 6

maceuticals, a Canadian drugmaker, to turn over documents tied to price hikes imposed earlier this year. The company's U.S.-listed stock plunged \$32.97, or 17 percent, to \$166.50.

Alcoa was among the



Traders Frank Masiello, center, and John Panin, right, talk about stock prices at the New York Stock Exchange. Ongoing worries about the health of the Chinese economy and another big sell-off in drugmakers pushed the stock market back toward its lowest level of the year.

(AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

down 11.7 percent from its record close of 2,130.82, set in May of this year.

Some analysts expressed surprise at the ferocity of Monday's sell-off, given the relative strength of the U.S. economy. Hiring is coming back and the housing market is recovering.

"The economy here is still improving. There's no reason that this selling pressure should be as severe as it has been," said Robert Pav-

percent, its worst day in more than four years. The sector — a recent favorite of investors — slumped last week after Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton announced a plan to tackle rising drug costs. The sector has plunged 27 percent since reaching a peak in July. Congressional Democrats are also pressing a Republican committee chairman to force Valeant Phar-

stocks that bucked the trend on Monday and closed higher.

The metals maker gained after announcing that it will split into two independent companies. Its bauxite, aluminum and casting operations will be in one company and its engineering and transportation businesses will be in another. The company's stock rose 52 cents, or 6 percent, to \$9.59. □

Hitachi pays \$19M to resolve 'improper' payments case

MARCY GORDON
AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hitachi Ltd. has agreed to pay \$19 million to resolve U.S. regulators' allegations that it inaccurately reported improper payments it made to South Africa's ruling party to win contracts to build power plants.

The Securities and Exchange Commission announced the settlement Monday with the Japanese conglomerate.

The SEC says Hitachi paid \$6 million to a front company for the African National Congress, South Africa's ruling party. Of that, \$1 million in fees paid in a 2008 secret arrangement were masked as consulting fees in Hitachi's books, the agency said. Hitachi won two contracts to build power plants.

Tokyo-based Hitachi neither admitted nor denied wrongdoing in the settlement, which also imposed

a permanent injunction against future violations of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

Hitachi, whose businesses include power systems, health care, defense and energy, has a number of subsidiaries in the U.S.

It was Hitachi's "lax" financial controls that enabled its South African subsidiary to make the improper payments and then disguise them in its books, SEC Enforcement Director Andrew

Ceresney said in a statement.

Hitachi sold a 25 percent stake in the South African subsidiary to the ANC front company, Chancellor House Holdings, according to the SEC. That enabled Chancellor and the ANC to share in the profits from any power station contracts obtained by Hitachi, the agency said.

Representatives for Hitachi didn't immediately return a request for comment. □

Whole Foods to slash 1,500 jobs in next 8 weeks

NEW YORK (AP) — Grocery chain Whole Foods is cutting about 1,500 jobs over the next eight weeks as it looks to lower prices and keep up with competition. The cuts represent about 1.6 percent of its workforce.

But Whole Foods Market Inc. said in a regulatory filing on Monday that many of the reductions will come through attrition. It anticipates workers whose jobs are cut will find other jobs from the almost 2,000 open positions across the company or from new jobs that'll be created by more than 100 new stores in development.

Whole Foods said it has added more than 9,000 jobs in the past year and created nearly 35,000 jobs over the last five years.

Whole Foods was recently hurt by bad publicity when New York City officials found it was overcharging customers. New York City's Department of Consumer Affairs said that Whole Foods stores were overstating the weight of some pre-packaged products, like chicken tenders and a vegetable platter. Whole Foods has said that it is taking steps to prevent overcharging, including training for workers and a pledge to give away products if customers discover they were overcharged.

The company has also been facing intense competition, with the organic offerings it's known for becoming more widely available.

It's trying to appeal to a broader audience, with plans to open a new chain of "365" stores with lower prices. The first location is set to open next year in Los Angeles, and leases have been signed for additional locations in Bellevue, Washington; Houston; Portland, Oregon; and Santa Monica, California.

Whole Foods shares slipped 9 cents to \$31.01 in morning trading Monday. Its shares are down about 38 percent so far this year. □

Glencore share price plunges as commodity markets slump

PAN PYLAS

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Commodities group Glencore saw its share price plunge by around a third on Monday as concerns mounted over its ability to service its sky-high debts at a time when earnings are battered by low commodity prices.

The troubles at the company, which is one of the world's largest producers and traders of commodities, illustrate the dramatic changes sweeping through the industry as an economic slowdown in China weighs on the prices for metals and minerals.

In Glencore's case, the shares began dropping Monday after investment bank Investec Securities warned investors that the company may end up having to plow all its earnings into meeting its debt commitments if commodity prices, notably copper, don't start rising. Investec analyst Hunter Hillcoat says Glencore is more exposed than rivals such as BHP Billiton and Rio Tinto because of the sheer size of its debt mountain, which stands at around \$30 billion.

In a note to clients, Hillcoat warned that Glencore could end up "solely working to repay debt obligations" if commodity prices don't recover. Under such a scenario, Hillcoat said, the value of holding Glencore shares is "virtually eliminated."

That proposition prompted a savage sell-off of Glencore shares, which closed down 29 percent at 69 pence in London, slightly higher than the all-time low of 67 pence recorded earlier in the day, according to financial information provider FactSet.

Glencore, which was founded in 1974 by the late commodities trader Marc Rich, floated in 2011 at a share price of 530 pence, a listing that valued the company at a little less than 40 billion pounds (\$60 billion) and made several of the company's executives, including CEO Ivan Glasenberg, billionaires.

A person close to Glencore, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak on the record, said Investec's analysis was "flawed" and noted that the company was on course to have free cash flow — what's left after debt payments — of around \$3 billion this year at current market prices.

Sentiment toward Glencore PLC, which is headquartered in Switzerland, has been fragile for months as investors fretted over the impact of falling commodity prices on earnings and the company's ability to meet its debt repayments.

China's economic downturn is at the heart of Glencore's difficulties. Mining and commodities companies sought to take advantage of the country's booming growth at the turn of the decade, when many of the world's leading economies were struggling to emerge from the global financial crisis and ensuing recession.

According to Investec's Hillcoat, mining companies "gorged themselves on cheap debt in a race to grow production following the Chinese stimulus that occurred in the wake of the global financial crisis" and that the consequences of that "are only now coming home to roost, as mines take a long time to build."

Debt, said Hillcoat, "is fast becoming the most important consideration for mining company management." Commodity prices, meanwhile, have dropped sharply in recent months. Copper, which is used in electronics and which Glencore is particularly exposed to, is trading near six-year lows.

Glencore is aware of its problems. Earlier this month, it announced a package of measures — from asset sales to suspending dividends and raising cash from new and existing shareholders — that it hopes will reduce debt by \$10 billion. □

Alcoa splitting into 2 companies

NEW YORK (AP) — Alcoa will split into two independent companies, separating its bauxite, aluminum and casting operations from its engineering, transportation and global rolled products businesses. The century-plus-old metals maker has been dealing with a downturn in its smelt-

free the stronger part of a company's business from a weaker segment.

The aluminum and upstream products company will retain the Alcoa name. The name of the engineered products company has yet to be determined. Alcoa Inc., which is based in New York with significant

sue their own distinctive strategic directions," Chairman and CEO Klaus Kleinfeld said in a statement.

The company has been shifting its focus to its more profitable automotive and aerospace products, which also involve titanium. It has been shutting down unprofitable aluminum smelters as



The Alcoa logo is seen in the lobby of Alcoa's headquarters in Pittsburgh. Alcoa announced, Monday, Sept. 28, 2015, it will split into two independent companies by separating its aluminum and automotive metals businesses.

(AP Photo/Gene J. Puskar)

ing business because of lower aluminum prices. The split will create one company focusing on upstream products, including aluminum. The other company will focus on engineered products, which includes the automotive and aerospace segments.

The split is part of a wider movement by companies to spin off units in a bid to boost shareholder value. Often, the strategy helps

operations in Pittsburgh, expects the split to be complete by the second half of 2016.

The company has been an industrial presence in the U.S. economy for well over a century, dating its founding as the Pittsburgh Reduction Co. in 1888.

"In the last few years, we have successfully transformed Alcoa to create two strong value engines that are now ready to pur-

a surplus of the material on the market weighs down prices and profit.

Earlier this month, Alcoa broadened a partnership with Ford Motor Co. through the use of a stronger form of aluminum for auto body parts.

It also spent about \$60 million to expand its three-dimensional manufacturing capabilities at a technical center in the Pittsburgh area. □

Nexstar offers \$1.9B for Media General

TOM MURPHY

AP Business Writer

Nexstar Broadcasting, attempting to drive to wedge between Media General and Meredith Corp., offered nearly \$1.9 billion to buy Media General on Monday.

Media General Inc. earlier this month made a \$2.4 billion offer for Meredith, which owns television stations and publishes about

20 magazines.

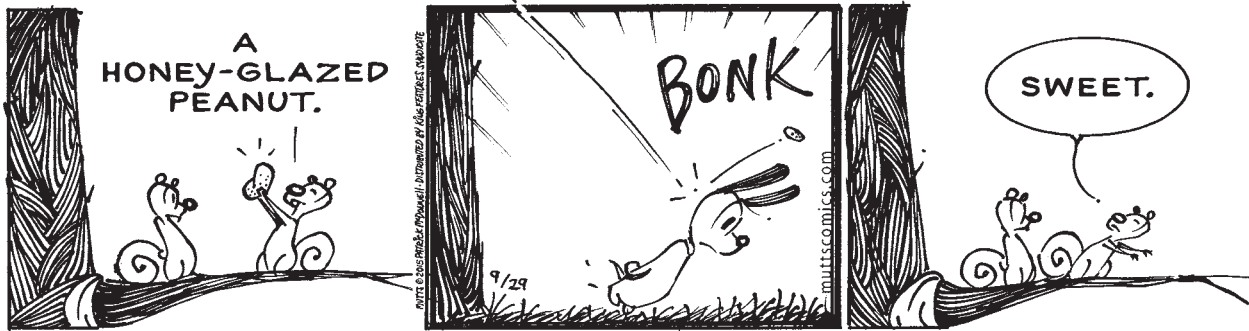
The deal, according to Media General, would create a company with almost 90 television stations in 54 markets and magazines including Better Homes and Gardens and Martha Stewart Living.

Nexstar on Monday bid a combination of cash and stock valued at \$14.50 for each Media General share, a 30 percent pre-

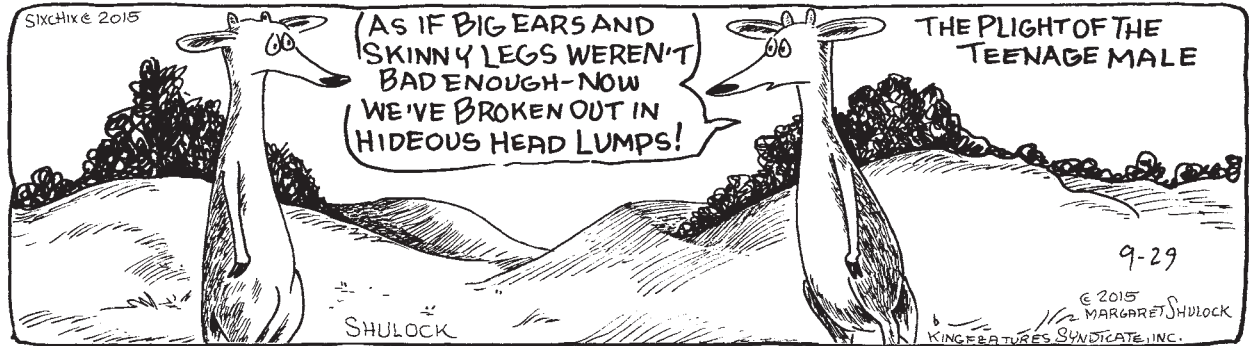
mium to Media General's closing price Friday.

The Irving, Texas, company values the deal at \$4.1 billion including debt. Nexstar owns, operates, programs or provides services to 107 television stations in 58 markets. It said a tie-up with Media General would reach 39 percent of U.S. TV households and create the second-largest owner of major network affiliates. □

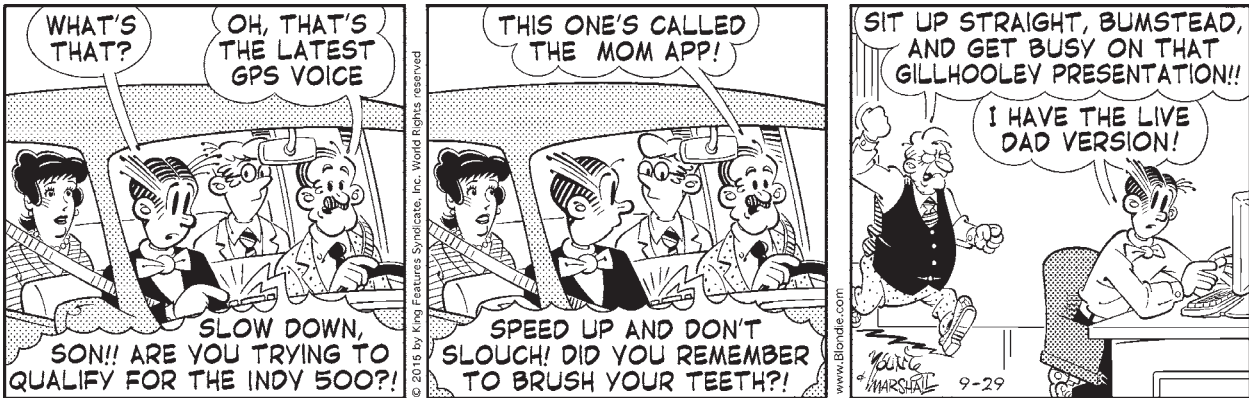
Mutts



6 Chix



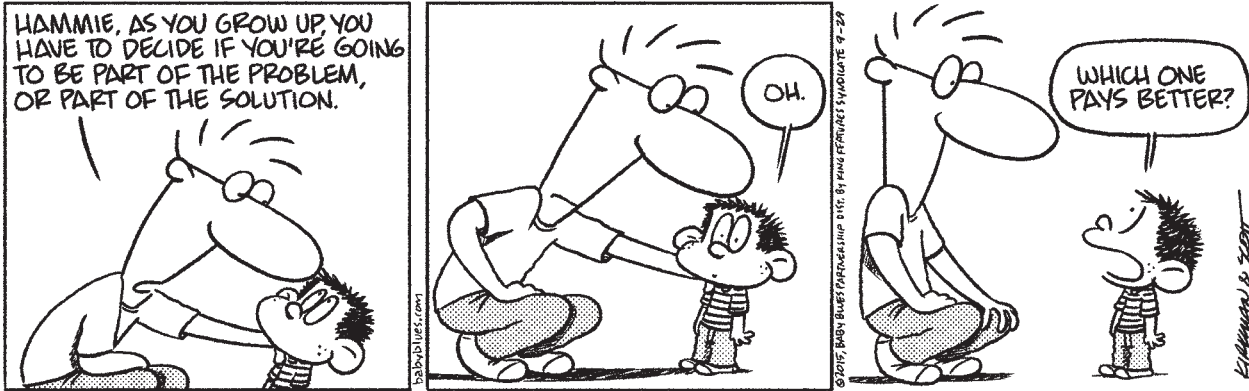
Blondie



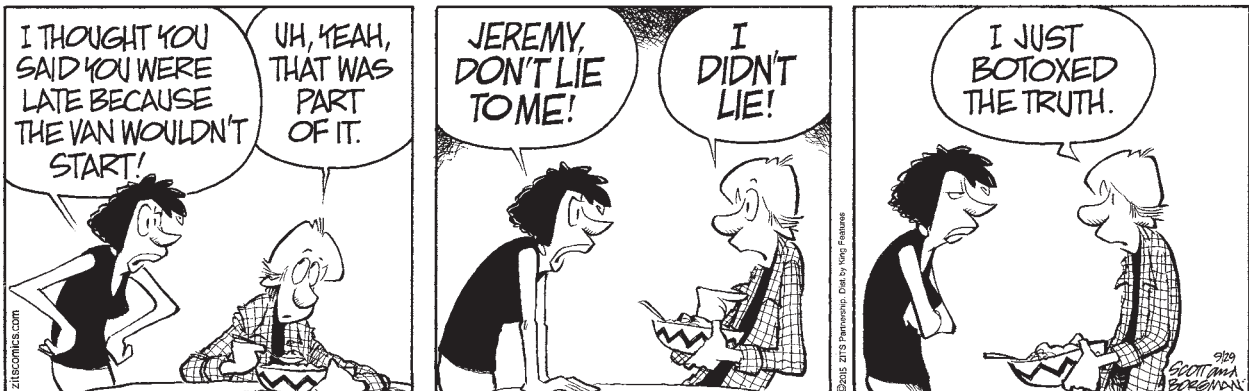
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

			8		4			
		6				1		
	4	5	7		9	8	3	
7		8				2		1
				5				
6		2				5		9
	2	9	4		8	6	5	
		4				3		
			2		1			

Difficulty Level ★★

9/29

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

9	8	4	6	2	1	3	7	5
1	5	6	9	7	3	2	8	4
3	2	7	5	4	8	1	9	6
8	6	5	2	1	7	4	3	9
2	3	1	4	6	9	7	5	8
7	4	9	3	8	5	6	1	2
5	9	2	1	3	4	8	6	7
4	1	8	7	9	6	5	2	3
6	7	3	8	5	2	9	4	1

ACROSS

- 1 Kippur; Day of Atonement
- 4 Thrusts a knife into
- 9 "___ jungle out there!"
- 13 Primates
- 15 Tree with pods used to make chocolate
- 16 Fly high
- 17 Casino game
- 18 Like a healthy red complexion
- 19 Mom's sister
- 20 Pests
- 22 Riles
- 23 Engrossed
- 24 Battery size
- 26 Mother superior
- 29 As red as a beet
- 34 Releases
- 35 Be a freeloader
- 36 Female deer
- 37 Clothing
- 38 Character in "Beetle Bailey"
- 39 Ice sheet
- 40 ___ out a living; get by
- 41 Heats in the microwave
- 42 Adolescents
- 43 Kept
- 45 Like rough sandpaper
- 46 Apply finger paints
- 47 Where to put Compound W
- 48 ___ pops; soft drinks
- 51 "___ the mulberry bush, the monkey..."
- 56 Excited
- 57 Back-comb the hair
- 58 Regrets
- 60 Egg on
- 61 Speediness
- 62 Engrave
- 63 More or ___
- 64 Go into
- 65 Heaven above

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12
13			14		15					16			
17					18					19			
	20			21						22			
			23					24	25				
26	27	28				29	30			31	32	33	
34					35					36			
37					38					39			
40				41						42			
43			44						45				
			46					47					
48	49	50			51	52	53			54	55		
56					57					58		59	
60					61					62			
63					64					65			

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

9/29/15

Monday's Puzzle Solved

DOWN

- 1 Long-haired ox
- 2 "___ Sesame"; Ali Baba's cry
- 3 List of dishes
- 4 Leftover bits
- 5 Mock
- 6 Current letters
- 7 Commanded
- 8 Teriyaki marinade
- 9 Biblical book
- 10 Sightseeing trip
- 11 Couldn't stay afloat
- 12 Carney & Monk
- 14 Evening parties
- 21 Be impudent
- 25 Durable wood
- 26 Run ___; chase
- 27 Penniless
- 28 Sire children
- 29 Like the audience of a dull speaker
- 30 Pieces of wood
- 31 Loafer
- 32 Lunch hours
- 33 Honking birds

R	O	M	P	S		S	C	A	M		S	T	A	B										
S	H	E	E	T		H	A	L	E		P	O	L	O										
V	I	S	T	A		A	K	I	N		L	A	D	S										
P	O	S	I	T	I	V	E		T	H	E	S	E	S										
					T	U	N	E		C	O	U	N	T	R	Y								
					I	N	D	E	E		O	A	R	E										
					T	I	E		S	I	N	G	S		S	I	E	V	E					
					I	N	F	O		A	O	R	T	A		D	A	I	S					
					S	E	T	U	P		B	E	E	R	S		S	A	P					
										T	O	O	L	S		M	O	S	T	L	Y			
										I	N	C	L	U	D	E		F	O	O	L			
										R	E	L	A	T	E		C	A	R	N	I	V	A	L
										A	P	E	S		S	N	O	B		E	V	A	D	E
										T	A	R	T		S	A	I	L		S	E	N	D	S
										E	L	K	S		A	B	L	E		T	R	E	S	S

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9/29/15

- 35 Create
- 38 Bask
- 39 Double ___; two back-to-back
- 41 Ms. Peeples
- 42 Spanish bull
- 44 Old sayings
- 45 Occupation
- 47 Spend foolishly
- 48 Writer Bellow
- 49 Villain
- 50 Chows & labs
- 52 Slender; thin
- 53 Final
- 54 Loony
- 55 Knock down
- 59 Bashful

Philadelphia: Empty tables, deserted streets for pope's visit

M. R. SISAK, M. RUBINKAM
Associated Press
PHILADELPHIA (AP) — One restaurant owner spent \$7,500 on food she couldn't sell. A smoothie shop's business was down more than 50 percent. Even as hundreds of thousands of people thronged the Benjamin Franklin Parkway on Sunday for Mass with Pope Francis, his weekend visit to Philadelphia apparently failed to deliver the economic boon predicted by organizers. Some businesses closed early, some downtown hotel rooms went unfilled and normally bustling city streets were deserted over the weekend as residents either stayed home or left town, and pilgrims kept their wallets in their pockets.

Celebrity chef Marc Vetri, whose eponymous restaurant is a fine-dining landmark, took to Facebook to rail against city leaders who he said "decided to roll out the red carpet for everyone making the pilgrimage, and roll us up in the carpet to place in storage until Monday." He said he was "haunted by the empty streets and shuttered windows."

One of Vetri's smaller pizzerias, at least, was enjoying a brisk business as people were leaving after Mass and the global gathering ended; the pizzeria near a security checkpoint was packed with an hour wait for a table. And at an outside tent, it was doing a brisk business selling pizza by the slice, pies, and drinks.

At Midtown III restaurant, co-owner Vivian Tafuri rented a refrigerated truck, filled it with \$7,500 worth of food and spent another \$1,000 on a parking space.

"It's all wasted," Tafuri fumed Sunday. "All the time our mayor was saying a million and a half people, and nothing. Wasted." Liz Furey, a bartender at the restaurant, said the

pope's visit chased away the regulars.

"The people who are visiting are having a good time at the parkway. But as far as the local businesses were concerned, what we were promised didn't happen at all," Furey said. The World Meeting of Families, the Vatican-sponsored conference that drew Francis to Philadelphia, had estimated 1.5 million people would show up for the pope's weekend visit, with 10,000 staying overnight and business sales of \$390 million. Meryl Levitz, president and chief executive of Visit Philadelphia, the main tourism marketing agency, acknowledged Sunday that many shops and restaurants were hurting for business. □

Classifieds

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40	105	\$5,000
48/49	119	\$4,500
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35	314	\$4,000
30	515	\$4,900
30	311	\$5,000
23	343	\$4,500
27	103	\$4,000
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Life on Mars? NASA says planet appears to have flowing water

MARCIA DUNN

AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.

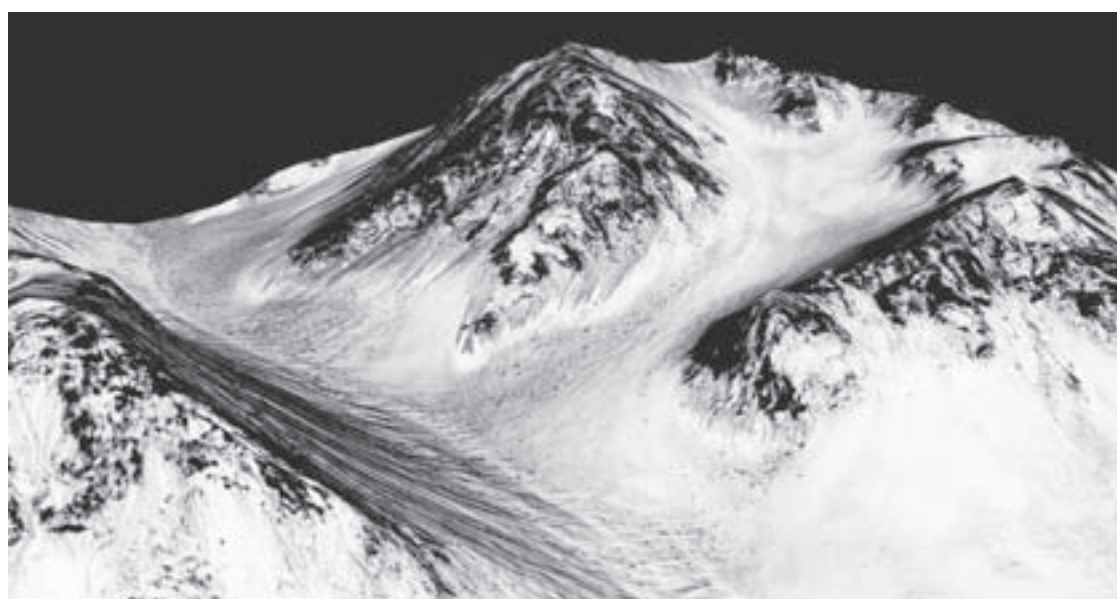
(AP) — Mars appears to be flowing with rivulets of salty water, at least in the summer, scientists reported Monday in a finding that boosts the odds of life on the red planet.

"It suggests that it would be possible for there to be life today on Mars," NASA's science mission chief, John Grunsfeld, said at a news conference.

Scientists in 2008 confirmed the existence of frozen water on Mars. Now instruments aboard NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter have yielded the strongest evidence yet that salt water in liquid form trickles down certain Martian slopes each summer, according to the researchers. "Mars is not the dry, arid planet that we thought of in the past," said Jim Green, director of planetary science for NASA. "Under certain circumstances, liquid water has been found on Mars."

The rivulets — if that's what they are, since the evidence for their existence is indirect — are about 12 to 15 feet wide and 300 feet or more long, scientists said.

"What we're dealing with is wet soil, thin layers of wet soil, not standing water," said Alfred McEwen of the University of Arizona at Tucson, the principal scientist for the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter's high-resolution imaging experiment. Because liquid water is essential to life, the findings could have major implications for the possibility of Martian life. The researchers said in the journal *Nature Geoscience* that further exploration is warranted to determine whether microscopic life exists on



This undated photo provided by NASA and taken by an instrument aboard the agency's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter shows dark, narrow, 100 meter-long streaks on the surface of Mars that scientists believe were caused by flowing streams of salty water.

the planet.

McEwen said he, for one, believes the possibility of life on Mars to be "very high," though it would be microbial and somewhere in the Martian crust.

The presence of liquid water could also make life easier for astronauts visiting or living on Mars. Water could be used for drinking and for creating oxygen and rocket fuel. NASA's goal is to send humans there in the 2030s.

The evidence of flowing water consists largely of dark, narrow streaks on the surface that tend to appear and grow during the warmest Martian months and fade the rest of the year.

Mars is extremely cold even in summer, and the streaks are in places where the temperature is as low as minus-10 degrees Fahrenheit. But salt can lower the freezing point of water and melt ice.

The source of the water is a mystery. Scientists noted it could be melting ice, an underground aquifer, water vapor from the thin Martian atmosphere, or some

combination.

McEwen said that there appears to be a "significant volume" of water, speculating it could fill many Olympic swimming pools, but that it is spread thin.

The streaks were spotted by the orbiter's high-resolution, telescopic camera. Another on-board instrument detected the chemical signature of salt compounds combined with water.

Michael Meyer, lead scientist for NASA's Mars exploration program, said the only definitive way for now to determine whether there's life on Mars is to collect rocks and soil for analysis on Earth — something a U.S. lander set for liftoff in 2020 will do.

Now that scientists know what they're looking for, a better, more methodical search can be carried out, Green said.

"Water is one of the most precious resources necessary for a human mission to the red planet," said Rep. Lamar Smith, R-Texas, chairman of the House science, space and technol-

ogy committee. "The more evidence we find of it, the more encouraged I am for future Mars missions."

Present-day Mars is nothing like ancient Mars. Three billion years ago, our most Earthlike neighbor had a huge ocean, but something radical happened, and exactly what remains a mystery.

Associated Press

The idea of water — and life — on Mars has been irresistible to earthlings for generations.

In 1877, Italian astronomer Giovanni Schiaparelli spied what he called "canali" on Mars — Italian for "channels" — but the word was mistranslated as "canals" in English, causing imaginations to run wild. In the early 1900s, amateur astronomer Percival Lowell claimed to have spotted irrigation canals and theorized they were built by Martians.

In 2008, NASA's Phoenix spacecraft landed on Mars and confirmed the long-suspected presence of ice in the soil. The Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter has been circling the planet since 2006.

The lead author of the research paper, Lujendra Ojha, is a Ph.D. candidate at Georgia Institute of Technology.

For NASA, at least, the timing couldn't be better. This Friday, the NASA-approved movie "The Martian" has its premiere. □

Rosetta comet likely formed from 2 separate objects

FRANK JORDANS

Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — When the Rosetta space probe sent back its first close-up pictures of a comet last year, scientists got a bit of a surprise: Instead of the ball of rock and ice they had expected, the comet turned out to have two distinct lobes connected by a "neck."

Some said it looked like a giant rubber duck. Researchers have now concluded that the comet 67P Churyumov-Gerasimenko was probably formed when two separate

objects collided during the early stages of the solar system, according to a paper published Monday in the journal *Nature*.

Using data collected by the OSIRIS cameras on-board Rosetta, scientists were able to determine that the flat planes and arcs on 67P's surface are in fact terraces that wrap around the two lobes like layers around an onion.

"For the first time, this study gives observational evidence on how the primordial bodies formed," said Matteo Massironi, one of the study's authors. □

'The Walk' a big-screen balancing act in a lost art

JAKE COYLE

AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Robert Zemeckis' big, cinematic tale of Philippe Petit's audacious 1974 World Trade Center high-wire stunt is itself a bold balancing act in a lost art.

Mixing big-screen spectacle and an original story about real-life human beings is not the usual recipe in today's reboot-crazed Hollywood. "The Walk," which boasts some of the best 3-D the medium has seen, would be out of place amid the superheroes of summer, just as it stands out among the dour dramas of the fall.

"I so subscribe to the Francois Truffaut quote that a successful movie artistically is a movie that's a perfect blend of truth and spectacle," Zemeckis said in a recent interview. "I do think that's what we go to movies to see."

"The Walk," which opens nationwide Friday, stars Joseph Gordon-Levitt as Petit and recounts the French high-wire artist's famous caper: sneaking to the top of the just-completed Twin Towers to hoist a wire and tiptoe between them.

But the film is also an argument for the magic of movies to ascend to greater heights than a comic-book factory. It's not hard to see "The Walk" as a metaphor



Robert Zemeckis, left, and Joseph Gordon-Levitt attend the New York Film Festival opening night gala premiere for "The Walk" at Alice Tully Hall on Saturday, Sept. 26, 2015, in New York.

Associated Press

for Zemeckis' movies altogether: the story of an individual elevated to dreamy heights of the clouds.

"If you're going to do an original movie that isn't a sequel, you've got to really supply a big cinematic experience," says Tom Rothman, who produced "The Walk" while reviving TriStar Pictures before becoming chairman of the Sony Pictures Entertainment motion picture group.

"Everyone knows there's so much great stuff on television and blah, blah, blah,"

adds Rothman. "You've got to really give people a reason to get out of their house and go to the cinema and see it on the big screen with a capital B. And that's what this is."

The film has for years been a passion project for the 63-year-old Zemeckis ("Back to the Future," "Forrest Gump"), one of Hollywood's great illusionists. He spent a decade in digitally animated movies ("The Polar Express," "A Christmas Carol") before returning to live-action with 2012's

"Flight," a character study of an alcoholic pilot (Denzel Washington) that enticed moviegoers with an extraordinary plane crash set-piece — a carrot of special-effects dazzle.

In the time since Zemeckis began developing "The Walk," Petit's stunt was retold in James Marsh's Oscar-winning documentary "Man on Wire." But while Zemeckis grants it's a very good documentary, he notes it's missing one essential thing: Petit's walk.

That's because when Pe-

tit made his early morning stroll with a handful of collaborators, it was photographed but not videotaped. "Philippe was on the wire for 45 minutes and in all of Manhattan, no one could scramble a movie camera in 45 minutes," chuckles Zemeckis. "How times have changed."

The central feat of "The Walk" is its digital recreation of the Towers, along with the vertigo-inducing 3-D sensation of being 110 stories in the air. The dizzying effect — made within a budget of just \$35 million — sent some moviegoers rushing to the restroom at the film's New York Film Festival premiere on Saturday.

"My cameraman and my visual effects supervisor and I, we studied what the best way would be to evoke that feeling of vertigo," says Zemeckis. "We really paid attention to where we put the camera, what lenses we used, how we moved the camera, what gave us the most dramatic sensation of height." Gordon-Levitt spent several days at Petit's home in the Catskills training with the still passionate 66-year-old Frenchman. Armed with an extensive, minute-by-minute lesson plan, Petit swore Gordon-Levitt would be walking unassisted on a wire within a week — and he was. □

Kenny Rogers announces retirement from touring

KRISTIN M. HALL

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — "The Gambler" Kenny Rogers says he's retiring from touring and will do one last worldwide farewell tour after five decades on the road.

Rogers, 77, says in a video message on his website that he wants to spend more time with his two young sons and his wife, Wanda.

"In my book I wrote, 'There's a fine line between being selfish and being driven,' and I think I crossed

that line a lot when I was younger," Rogers said. "And I didn't get a chance to spend a lot of time with my older boys and I regret that now."

The Grammy-winning singer will be on the road through the end of the year promoting his latest Christmas album, "Once Again It's Christmas," and will do a final world tour in 2016 with cities and dates to be announced later.

Rogers, whose career has spanned country, pop, Christian and folk genres and over 65 albums, said

he's still thinking about making new music, maybe a duets album.

"I found that everybody sings better as a duet," said Rogers, who famously made "Islands in the Stream" with Dolly Parton a huge pop song.

Rogers will start his Christmas tour in November in Canada.

His album is a mix of classic holiday tunes like "Little Drummer Boy" and "Baby It's Cold Outside," a few new songs and plenty of great duets with singers like Alison Krauss, Jennifer



In this Nov. 6, 2013 file photo, Kenny Rogers, winner of the Willie Nelson lifetime achievement award, poses backstage at the 47th annual CMA Awards in Nashville, Tenn.

Associated Press

Nettles and the a cappella group Home Free.

"There's a faction of people that always love Christ-

mas music," Rogers said. "Music has always been the great memory maker of all times." □

Looking for Broadway's next star? Turn on your TV

MARK KENNEDY
AP Drama Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — There are plenty of places that get young people ready for Broadway — Juilliard, Carnegie Mellon, Yale and New York University. But don't forget "So You Think You Can Dance."

The Fox TV show, which just concluded its 12th season, has turned into a reliable springboard for scores of Broadway dancers, helping performers land in everything from "The King and I" to "Hamilton."

"I can't say enough about how much I learned on the show, how many connections I made on the show and how I needed it as a performer and as an artist," said Melanie Moore, the Season 8 winner who went on to be Peter Pan in "Finding Neverland" and next has a featured part in "Fiddler on the Roof."

Alumni who have made a mark on Broadway include Ricky Ubeda in "On the Town," Virgil Gadson in "After Midnight," Cole Horibe and Alex Wong in "The King and I," and Thayne Jaspersen and Neil Haskell in "Hamilton." The recent ensemble of "Newsies" was studded with former "So You Think" dancers.

Contestants who endure the 10-week TV boot camp on "So You Think You Can Dance" must learn to adapt to new partners and unfamiliar dance styles,



In this Aug. 21, 2010 file photo, Mia Michaels poses with the award for outstanding choreography for "So You Think You Can Dance" in the press room at the Creative Arts Emmy Awards in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

all under the gaze of live cameras and judges. It's no wonder that Broadway comes knocking.

"I hire 'So You Think' alum whenever I can," said Broadway choreographer Spencer Liff, whose credits include the new "Spring Awakening" on Broadway and Neil Patrick Harris' TV show "Best Time Ever."

"A huge reason why is they are in the most high-pressure situation you can ever be in. The ones that can cut it and survive in that world,

I know that I can trust them to put them on a stage."

Moore, so strong on the TV show that she was nicknamed the "Beast," was 19 when she competed. It was the Georgia native's first big performing experience, and she mastered everything from Latin jazz to hip-hop.

"I developed this love of performing in front of a live, completely juiced-up audience," she said. After moving to Los Angeles and working on "Glee," she craved a new challenge.

"With a live audience, the stakes are always so high." These days, looking for "SYTYCD" credits in Playbills has replaced scanning for "Law & Order" mentions. But it's not just the dancers who are making the leap — choreographers on "So You Think You Can Dance" are also enjoying higher recognition and a fan base.

Some prominent choreographers who straddle both worlds include Liff, Warren Carlyle, Joshua Bergasse and Mia Michaels, who made her Broadway debut last season creating "Finding Neverland."

When it came time to replace Moore as Peter Pan, Michaels had a special dancer in mind. Naturally it was someone from "So You Think You Can Dance" — Amy Yakima.

Yakima, 21, the Season 10 winner from Michigan, dreamed of one day being on Broadway but not so early in her career. She was a natural choice to replace Moore since both women share a muscular style, an eagerness to learn and an ability to sing.

"She's one of my idols so it's kind of crazy to fill her shoes," Yakima said of Moore, who helped her learn the role. "As scared as I was, she made it a little bit better."

Hiring "So You Think You Can Dance" graduates

also helps the box office of Broadway shows since fans of the TV show will check out their dancing heroes onstage.

"I think that's why Broadway is hiring them now. Melanie Moore and Amy Yakima — they have their own fan bases. They're selling tickets," said Liff.

"So what normally (would) be just an ensemble dancer in a Broadway show is actually somebody that can bring people into the house. That's a new phenomenon."

Show alumni who end up in New York say they all keep in touch, bonded by what Moore calls a "crazy, harrowing" experience: "No matter what season you're on, you all understand the other person has been through this thing."

Michaels understands more than most. She challenges the TV contestants with tricky choreography set on park benches or about addiction and now reaps the reward by hiring them for the stage.

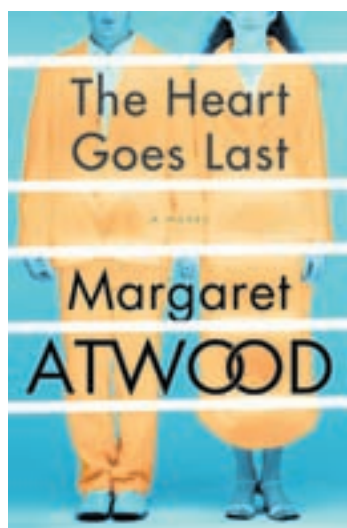
"It's not for the weak, that's for sure. It's a bit of a boot camp, in a sense," she said. "They really have to have that warrior spirit and they have to have that work ethic and they have to have the drive and passion in order to survive that show. It really does help to train these young, aspiring artists." □

Creeps and laughs in Atwood's 'The Heart Goes Last'

ROB MERRILL
Associated Press

"If you do bad things for reasons you've been told are good, does it make you a bad person?" That's the question on the mind of Margaret Atwood's heroine near the end of "The Heart Goes Last."

The science fiction that generates the question is worth the quick read. The heroine is Charmaine. She and her husband, Stan, are down on their luck, homeless, hungry and living out of their car. Cue a TV pitchman who seems to speak directly to them: "Tired of



This cover image released by Nan A. Talese/Doubleday shows "The Heart Goes Last," by Margaret Atwood.

Associated Press

living out of your car? You didn't sign up for this. You deserve better."

Soon Charmaine and Stan are indoctrinated in the Positron Project, a utopian experiment that is marketed as the perfect solution to America's prison problem. Residents spend a month as inmates and then a month in a manufactured town called Consilience, where all their needs are met and crime doesn't exist.

All they have to do is promise they'll never leave. Revealing much more of the plot would de-

prive readers of Atwood's creepy but entertaining vision of a possible future. The decor and pop culture of Consilience is copied from the 1950s, identified as the decade when most Americans considered themselves happy.

There are sex robots that look like Elvis, Marilyn Monroe movies on TV and postage stamp yards with hedges that rarely need trimming but that Stan slashes weekly anyway as an outlet for the anxiety he's starting to feel, "like an animal trapped in a cage." That anxiety soon gives

way to outright terror as Charmaine and Stan learn what's really happening behind the prison walls. From that point on the story unfolds quickly as they get caught up in a scheme to escape and expose the Positron Project.

Atwood escalates the tension with every page, but never lapses into outright horror. Stan imagines "hot bleeding hitting him in the face like a water cannon" as he slices through someone's neck with his hedge trimmer, but neither he nor Charmaine are superheroes. □

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